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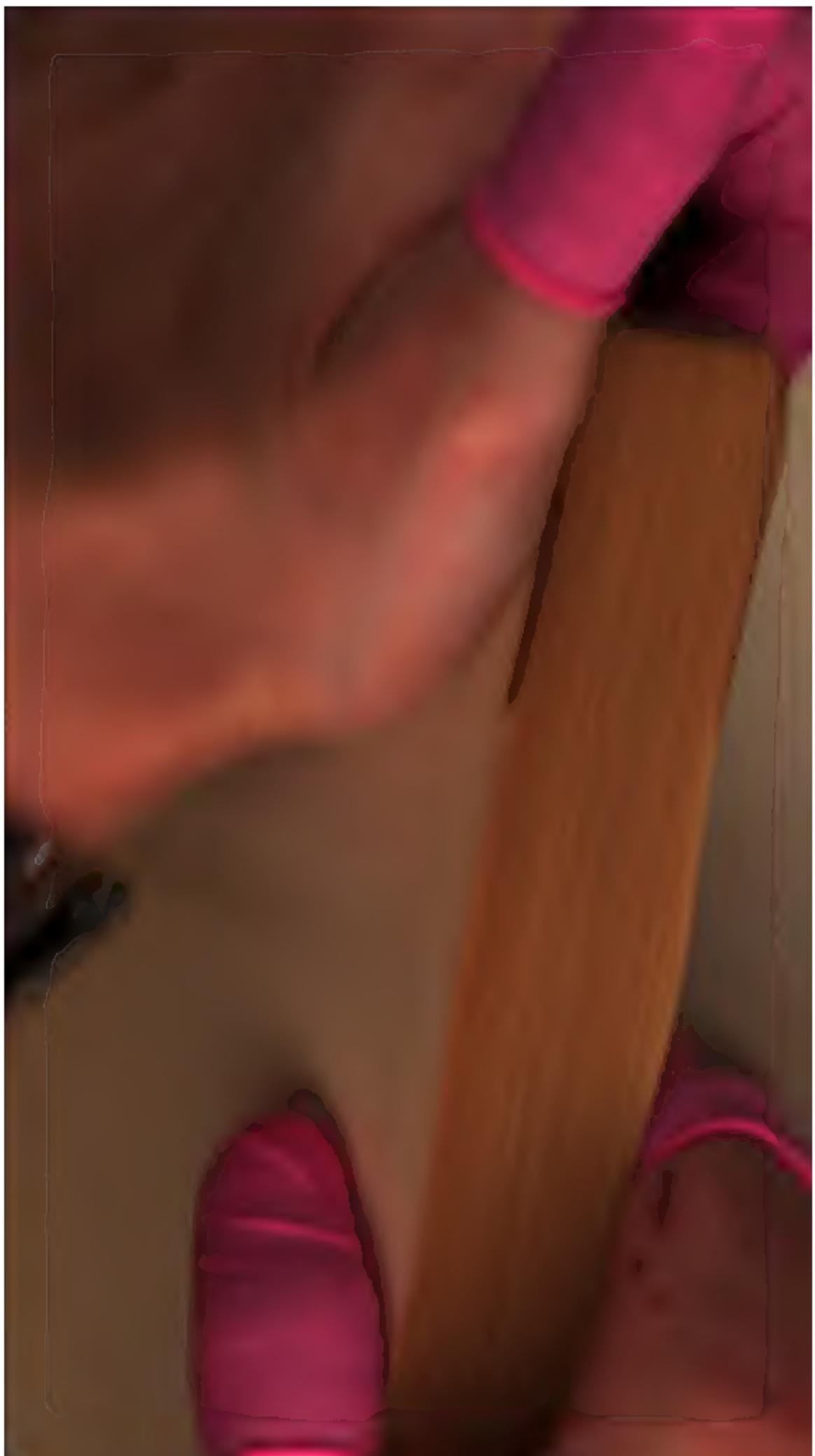
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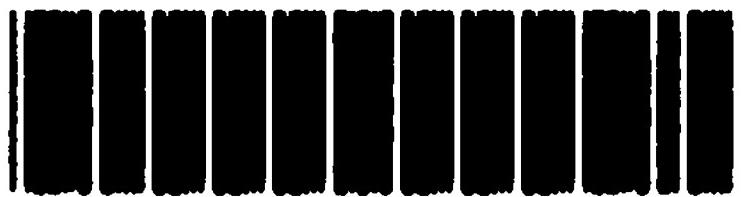
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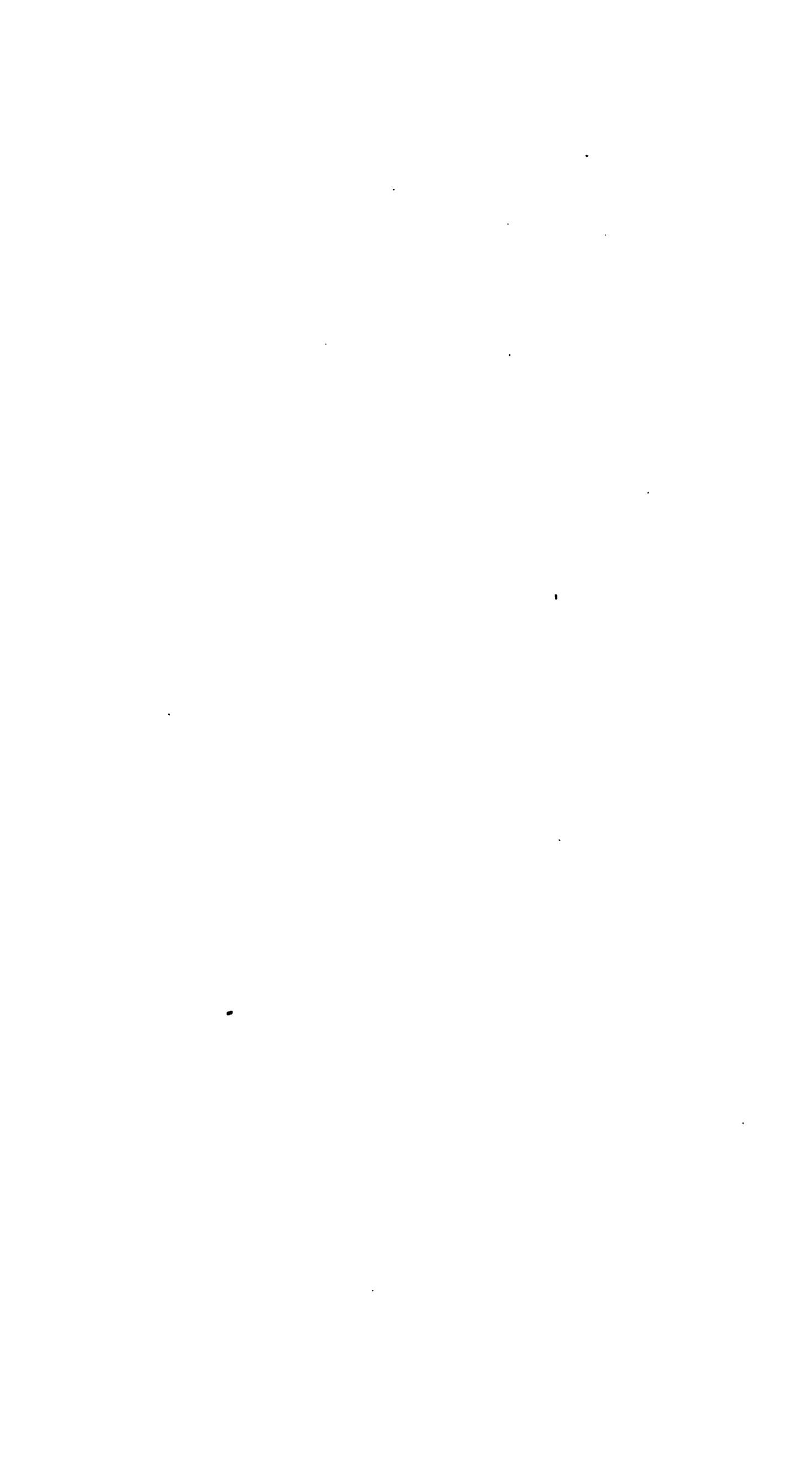




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HISTORICAL SKETCHES
OF
CHRISTIANITY IN ENGLAND,
FROM THE EARLIEST RECORDS
TO THE PASSING OF THE
ROMAN CATHOLIC RELIEF BILL, IN 1829.

BY J. B. HOLROYD.

"Nescire quid anteaquam natus sis acciderit, id est semper esse puerum."—CICERO.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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HISTORICAL SKETCHES.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE YEAR 1534 TO THE DEATH OF HENRY VIII.
IN 1547.

THE separation which took place between the church of England and the church of Rome, on Henry VIII. assuming the title of supreme head of the church of England, was not founded upon a change in his views on any of the doctrines held by the church of Rome, excepting the supremacy, as appears from his violent proceedings against all who were charged with the crime of heresy. But the providence of God overruled his proceedings for the accomplishment of a work which he never contemplated,—that of emancipating millions of human beings from the degrading and oppressive yoke of spiritual bondage.

The king met with much opposition from the monks and friars, who traversed the country in various directions, preaching vehemently in support of the papal pretensions, and against the king's supremacy. Nor was the publishing of these sentiments limited to the country; for one Peto, having to preach before his majesty in the king's chapel at Greenwich, took his text from

the prophecy addressed to Ahab, which he himself applied to the king, and told him to his face that many lying prophets had deceived him,—that he was a true Micaiah, and warned him that the dogs should lick his blood as they had done Ahab's,—that it was the greatest misery of princes to be daily abused by flatterers as he was. The king made no reply at the time, but, to counteract the impression it was intended to make on the public mind, he appointed Dr. Curwin to preach on the following Sunday, who justified the king's proceedings and condemned Peto as a rebel, a slanderer, and a traitor. Peto was gone to Canterbury, but another friar, from the same house, interrupted the doctor, and told him that he was one of the lying prophets who sought to establish the succession to the crown by adultery,—that he would justify all that Peto had said; and he became so vehement that he could not be silenced till the king commanded him to hold his peace. The only punishment inflicted upon Peto for his insolence was that of being called before the privy council and admonished. The public preaching of the monks and friars was not the only machinery employed by the priests against the proceedings of the king and parliament. In 1525, Elizabeth Barton, who was living as a servant at Aldington in Kent, was well known as a person that was subject to hysterical fits. Richard Masters, the priest of the place, thought Elizabeth might be advantageously used in raising the de-

clining interest of the church of Rome. He first informed archbishop Warham of her wonderful speeches, and that all who heard her believed she was inspired of God. Warham directed him to pay particular attention to her, and inform him of any new trances she might have. The priest took her immediately under his tuition. Before she was put under the discipline of Masters she could never remember any thing she had uttered in her fits ; but he soon convinced her that what she then said was by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and that it was her duty openly to avow it. Being a very ignorant girl, she became a pliant tool in the hands of this crafty priest. The fame of this new prophetess soon spread from one end of the kingdom to the other. Among the number of her more respectable proselytes were Sir Thomas More,—Fisher, bishop of Rochester,—and Warham, archbishop of Canterbury. The scheme of Masters succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations, and he found an active coadjutor in Dr. Bocking, a canon of Christ-church, Canterbury. They taught her how to counterfeit trances, in the art of which she soon became an adept, which was followed by a number of the most barefaced impositions ever practised in the world. The more effectually to cover their designs, a deputation was appointed to investigate the matter, and their report, being favourable, gave greater credit to the imposture. She now assumed the character of a nun, and chose Dr. Bocking for her spiritual

father. In one of her trances she said that the Virgin Mary had appeared to her, and told her that she would never recover from her affliction until she visited the Virgin's image in Masters's chapel. On the day appointed, great multitudes attended to witness the miracle of healing. On being brought into the chapel, she fell prostrate in one of her trances, and delivered a number of rhymes in honour of the Virgin and the popish religion. She also delivered some set speeches against the new doctrines, which were called heresies. She predicted terrible things against the king for divorcing queen Catharine, and announced that Almighty God had declared that if he married Ann Boleyn he should not be king a month longer, but should die a villain's death.

The king for some time despised the ravings of this impostor, until he found that it was only one part of a plot on a large scale. In November, 1533, he issued an order for apprehending the maid and her accomplices, who were forthwith brought to the Star Chamber. Their examination took place in the presence of a great number of lords, when the nun, Richard Masters, Dr. Bocking, Richard Deering, Henry Gold, Hugh Rich, Richard Risby, Thomas Gold, Edward Twaites, and Thomas Laurence, who without any rack or torture confessed the whole conspiracy, and were sentenced to stand in St. Paul's during the sermon. At the close of the service, the king's officers gave each of them his bill of confession, to be openly

read before the congregation on the following Sunday. To convince the people of the gross impositions practised upon them by their spiritual guides, a scaffold was erected in front of the pulpit on which they all stood, while the bishop of Bangor preached, after which each read his bill of confession. They were then conveyed from the church to the Tower, and in all probability their punishment would not have amounted to more than imprisonment, had not some of their accomplices found access to the nun, and persuaded her to protest that all she had said in her former confession had been extorted from her by force.

The affair now assuming a more serious aspect was taken up by parliament, and pronounced a conspiracy against the king's life and crown. On the 29th of April, 1534, the nun, Masters, Bocking, Deering, Risby, and Gold, were all beheaded at Tyburn. At the place the nun made a full confession of her own guilt, and the justice of her sentence, but most solemnly declared that she had been encouraged in it by those learned men, who knew that she "was a poor wench without learning;" that, "being puffed up with their praises," she "fell into a certain kind of pride," and fancied that she "might feign whatever she would." After asking pardon of God and the king, she requested the people to pray that God would have mercy on her soul, and then submitted to her fate. Though this was one of the most atrocious impositions ever palmed upon the world, yet the nun and

her accomplices are all classed by Sanders among the martyrs for the true faith.

The legality of the divorce between the king and his first queen, Catharine, and his marriage with Ann Boleyn, had long agitated and perplexed the public mind. To set the subject at rest, the sentence of divorce pronounced by archbishop Cranmer was confirmed by an act of parliament, which settled the succession to the crown on the king's male issue by queen Anne, or any future queen, by which the princess Mary was excluded as illegitimate. This act was to be published in every county in the kingdom before the 1st day of May, 1534; and if, after that day, any person should, either by act or writing, attempt to disparage the king's present marriage, or to defeat the succession as then settled, he should be punished as a traitor. Another act was passed by the same parliament, and commissioners were appointed to compel every person above the age of twenty-one to take a solemn oath, acknowledging the legality of the king's marriage with Ann Boleyn, and engaging to support the succession. Though a clause in this oath recognised the king's supremacy, yet it was taken by the clergy both regular and secular, and by the laity of all ranks, with the exception of Sir Thomas More, and Fisher, bishop of Rochester, who were both executed for non-compliance. Judging from appearances, one might have supposed that the pope had lost both all his power and partisans in England; but these

appearances were very fallacious. The oath was taken by many merely to save their lives, and with a fixed determination to violate it as soon as they could with safety.

But, though the church of England had got a new head, it still retained its old persecuting spirit. In 1535, the king published a proclamation denouncing the penalty of death upon all who denied, or even disputed, the doctrine of transubstantiation, or any of the authorized doctrines, rites, and ceremonies of the holy church; such as holy bread, holy water, procession, creeping to the cross on Good Friday, &c. &c. By this proclamation the married clergy were deprived of their orders and benefices, and such as married afterwards were to be imprisoned, and punished at the king's pleasure. This severe law operated fatally to a number of Anabaptists, who, to avoid persecution in Germany, had sought sanctuary in England, but were apprehended and put to death, chiefly for denying the doctrine of transubstantiation. From the above it appears that what was heresy in the church of Rome was also heresy in the church of England, and that Henry exercised as cruel a power over private judgment in matters of religion as was assumed by the reigning pontiff, Paul III.

The greatest enemies to the king's supremacy, and the reformation in the church as intended by Cranmer, were the monks and friars, who traversed the country in every direction, preaching against

the king's measures, and endeavouring both to embroil his affairs with foreign princes, and to excite his subjects to rebellion. To give an effectual check to their violent proceedings, the king appointed Thomas Cromwell, then secretary of state, his vicegerent, with authority to appoint commissioners to visit all churches, metropolitan, cathedral, and collegiate; all monasteries and priories, both of men and women; to inquire into the conduct of archbishops, bishops, and dignitaries; of abbots and priors, abbesses, prioresses, monks and nuns, both as to spirituals and temporals; and to censure and punish according to their demerit. Their instructions consisted of eighty-six articles, relating to the state and management of their revenues, and of their relics, jewels, plate, furniture, &c. Some of these instructions were evidently founded upon a suspicion that the monks and nuns did not strictly observe their vows of chastity. They were commanded to inquire whether the monks of any monastery were defamed for incontinency; whether women were observed to resort to it by backways, &c. Respecting nunneries, they were carefully to examine the height of the outward wall, the strength of the doors and windows, with their bolts and bars; to search very diligently for dark and secret passages; to inquire whether the gates and doors were kept shut, and whether the keys were ever committed to the care of any of the young nuns, &c.

To avoid the scrutinizing search of the commissioners, which they knew would terminate to their disadvantage, several abbots and priors voluntarily surrendered their houses into the king's hands. In the houses of some that submitted to the examination were strange discoveries made, not at all to the honour of the inhabitants. Some of these "secret things" were executed with so much art, that had it not been for the violent factions, jealousies, and animosities among the monks and nuns, who informed against each other and their superiors, many of them would have escaped detection. Some of these discoveries were of so infamous a character that they cannot be named. No attempts were made to conceal their drunkenness and gluttony; and, in justification for having such a numerous offspring, some of them produced a dispensation from the pope to keep a mistress. This plea was put in by the holy father the prior of Maiden Bradley, who informed the visitors that he had only married off six of his sons and one of his daughters, out of the goods of his priory; but that several more of his children were now arrived at maturity. He also told them that he took for his mistresses the handsomest young maidens he could procure, and, when he was disposed to change, he provided them good husbands.* But the rules of propriety prohibit the transcribing many of the abominations contained in the reports of the visitors. Among their pre-

* Strype, ch. 34, 35.

tended relics, which were exposed and destroyed, were the Virgin Mary's milk, the coals that roasted St. Laurence, an angel with one wing that brought over the head of the spear that pierced our Saviour's side, the rood of grace, which was so contrived that the eyes and lips might be moved, as occasion required.

The visitors having executed their commission, their report was laid before parliament, and was thought quite sufficient as the basis of an act for the suppression of the lesser monasteries. The necessity of the measure is apparent from the preamble to the act, which states, "Forasmuch as manifest sin, vicious, carnal, and abominable living is daily used and committed in abbeys, priories, and other religious houses of monks, canons, and nuns; and albeit many continual visitations have been heretofore had by the space of two hundred years and more, for an honest reformation of such unthrifty, carnal, and abominable living, yet nevertheless little or no amendment is hitherto had, but their viciousness shamefully increaseth and augmenteth."* By the last act of the long parliament, passed in April, 1536, were suppressed all the houses of monks, canons, and nuns that did not each contain more than twelve members, and had not a yearly revenue of more than two hundred pounds. By this act three hundred and seventy-six religious houses were dissolved. The annual revenues arising from their lands amounted

* Statutes, 27 Henry VIII. c. 28.

to about £30,000, and their plate, jewels, furniture, and other goods, were estimated at £100,000; probably both these estimates were considerably below their real value. A new court was instituted, called the court of augmentation, the business of which was to dispose of the lands, receive the rents, and bring the profits into the exchequer: Every religious person that was turned out of his cell received forty-five shillings in money, and every governor had a pension. To relieve the government of this expense, the monks and friars were put into benefices as they became vacant; consequently the body of the inferior clergy became the avowed enemies of the Reformation. A violent clamour was made among the people by the monks and friars, who were preaching every where against the injustice of the suppression. To prevent the effects their representations were calculated to produce on the public mind, the king gave them back fifteen abbeys, and sixteen nunneries, for perpetual alms; but several of the abbots being convicted of forming plots and conspiracies against his majesty's government, he, two years after resumed the grants, and obtained an act of parliament empowering him to erect a number of cathedral churches and bishoprics, and endow them out of the profits of the religious houses. The king proposed to convert £18,000 a year into a revenue for eighteen bishoprics and cathedrals, but six only were erected.

The clergy had prevailed upon the king to pro-

hibit the reading of Tindal's translation of the New Testament into English, which they represented as being full of errors and heresies. A copy of this book found in the possession of any person at that time was sufficient to convict him of heresy, and subject him to the flames. But the more violently the clergy opposed the reading of Tindal's translation, the more importunate were the laity of all ranks to have the use of the Scriptures in their native language. At length Cranmer obtained the king's permission to prepare a translation of the Bible to be published by authority. For a speedy accomplishment of this work, Cranmer divided the New Testament into nine parts, and, having chosen nine of the best Greek scholars he could find, he committed the translation of one of those parts to each. When they had been all translated, he distributed those parts separately amongst the most learned of his brethren the bishops, to be corrected and returned by each of them with his observations. All the bishops complied with the archbishop's request, except Stokesley, bishop of London, who returned his part, the Acts of the Apostles, with a very unkind message, saying, "that he disapproved of allowing the use of the Scriptures to the people, which would betray them into damnable errors, and disturb the peace of the church." This message quite surprised the good primate, when one of the company observed, that Dr. Stokesley would never be troubled about any testament in which he had no legacy; and besides,

said he, the Apostles were so poor, that they are quite below the notice of my lord of London.

The archbishop, having brought the translation of the Scriptures to a state of completion, sent it to be printed at Paris, in the year 1537. Bonner was then ambassador at Paris, to whose care he recommended it. He obtained permission of the French king to have it printed in one large folio volume; but, upon a complaint made by the French clergy, the press was stopped, and most of the copies were seized and publicly burnt. A few copies escaped the flames, and were brought over to England, with the workmen and materials, where it was finished. The first complete edition of the Scriptures printed in England was executed in London, by Grafton, A. D. 1539, who printed one thousand five hundred copies at his own expense. Cromwell presented a copy of this Bible to the king, and requested his majesty's permission to allow his subjects, in all his dominions, to read the translation without control or hazard. Cromwell's proposal, for the free use of the Scriptures in the English language, met with a powerful opposition at court. It was represented to the king that if he allowed the people the free use of the Scriptures it would be impossible for him to govern his subjects in matters of faith, as the supreme head of the church. This objection was calculated to make an impression on the king's mind, as he was very tenacious about the supremacy. To meet this argument it was suggested,

that nothing could so effectually establish his supremacy in the minds of his subjects as the discovery that the popes had been imposing a blind obedience to an authority which had no foundation in Scripture, and that his majesty had brought them into the light of truth, in favouring them with the free use of the Word of God in their own native language. The bishops were equally divided for and against the measure. Cranmer of Canterbury, Goodrich of Ely, Fox of Hereford, Shaxton of Sarum, Latimer of Worcester, Hilsley of Rochester, and Barlow of St. David's, were all in favour of a reformation, both in the doctrines and ceremonies of the church, and for the free use of the Scriptures. In all these they were zealously opposed by Lee of York, Stokesley of London, Tunstall of Durham, Gardiner of Winchester, Sherborne of Chichester, Nix of Norwich, and Kite of Carlisle. A similar division of sentiment pervaded the inferior clergy, and the laity of all ranks. But the archbishop's request in favour of allowing the Bible to be read prevailed with the king, and a proclamation was published in the king's name, requiring all curates and parishes to procure themselves a copy of it before All-hallow-tide, under the penalty of forty shillings a month, so long as they neglected compliance. The eagerness of the people to read the Bible rendered the last clause unnecessary. The king declared that he "set forth the Bible, that his subjects by reading it might perceive the power, wisdom, and good-

ness of God, observe his commandments, obey the laws and their prince, and live in goodly charity among themselves."

Though by this special act of grace the people were permitted to read the sacred volume, they were not allowed to enter into disputes about its meaning, nor to expound what they read to such as flocked around them. But these admonitions rather excited than prevented discussion. On reading the words of our Lord on the institution of the sacrament, *Drink ye all of it*, the natural conclusion drawn by the people was that the priests had deprived them of the cup contrary to his express command, "Drink ye all of it." Nor was that passage in St. Paul against worship in an unknown tongue less calculated to awaken inquiry. They clearly saw that the church of Rome, by performing worship in an unknown tongue, had changed the institution of the apostolic church, consequently they could not say Amen, either in the collects or hymns.

Great complaints were made at court about the "abuses, errors, and damnable heresies," which some had published in every part of the country, and which the popish party represented as one of the evils arising out of the favour granted to the people of reading the Scriptures. They presented a list of those "abuses, errors, and damnable heresies," to the amount of sixty-seven. Many of these pretended errors and abuses are now the established doctrines and practices of the church of

England; such as preaching against transubstantiation, purgatory, extreme unction, auricular confession, penances, pardons, indulgences, praying to saints, worshipping images and relics, pilgrimages, holy water, hallowed oil, bread, candles, ashes, and palms: in short, against all the worship which has no foundation in the Scriptures, and to which, consequently, they would not conform. From the above we may infer that at this time the spirit and principles of the Reformation were but little known among the clergy, who complained that preachers were allowed to declaim, and the people to talk with impunity against the doctrines and ceremonies of the church.

In reply to a number of interrogatories sent by Cromwell to the clergy of the province of York, he received from a convocation held in that city the following answers:—That all who preached against purgatory, worshipping of saints, pilgrimages, images, &c., should be committed to the flames as heretics,—that neither the king nor any temporal man could be supreme head of the church by the laws of God,—that no clerk ought to be put to death without degradation,—that dispensations lawfully granted by the pope are good, and pardons have been allowed by general councils and the laws of the church,—we think that by the law of the church, general councils, interpretations of approved doctors, and consent of Christian people, the pope of Rome has been taken for the

head of the church, and vicar of Christ, and ought to be taken.*

The excessive indulgences at the tables of the popish priests had risen to such a height that the archbishop interposed his authority to prevent the immoderate expense and scandal their conduct brought upon religion. In the year 1541, the primate published the following bill of fare. The table of an archbishop was not to exceed six dishes of meat, and four of banquet,—a bishop's, five of meat, and three of banquet,—a dean's, or archdeacon's, four of meat, and two of banquet; and the lower clergy to have only two dishes of meat. But Bellaria, from whom Burnet takes the account, laments that the splendid entertainments at the tables of the dignified clergy, to which the people had so long been accustomed, formed an insuperable barrier against the archbishop's salutary regulation.

The suppression of the monasteries, the circulation of the Scriptures in English, and the queen's known attachment to the Reformation, encouraged the German princes to hope that the king would renounce the doctrines as well as the authority of the see of Rome, on the ground of which some overtures were made of entering into a league with him against the emperor and the pope. Many conferences were held, and the league was brought into a state of great forwardness. The popish party knew that the queen

* Strype's Appendix, N. 74.

was using her influence to promote the league, as being calculated to facilitate the Reformation. To counteract the queen's influence, every nerve was exerted, with that success which terminated in her destruction. The articles on which the league was to be formed were sent to bishop Gardiner, then ambassador at the court of France, who immediately wrote back to the king, urging him, by every argument he could devise, not to enter into the coalition. At the same time the duke of Norfolk and his party at court were endeavouring to accomplish a reconciliation with the emperor and the pope. But the queen was an insuperable barrier in the way of this reconciliation, because, since the see of Rome had pronounced her marriage null, it would never be allowed by any of the popish party. The first part of their scheme was to dispose of the queen, which from the temper of the king, and other concurring circumstances, they did not despair of accomplishing. The king had concluded, from the decease of those sons he had by the divorced queen, that the marriage was displeasing to God. The queen had been delivered of a dead son but a few months previous, which circumstance the popish party improved to their advantage, by so acting upon the king's prejudices as to induce him to draw a similar conclusion in reference to his present marriage. This suggestion was the more readily received by the king, from his having conceived a violent passion for Miss Seymour, a

maid of honour, who had all the charms of youth and beauty, with a temper between the gravity of the one and the gaiety of the other queen.

The heads of this party, perceiving that the king's affections were alienated from his present queen, infused a suspicion of her fidelity, for which, unhappily, her natural levity gave them too successful a pretext. Though this is one of the most remarkable events in the reign of Henry VIII., yet our prescribed limits will not allow us more fully to detail its circumstances than is necessary to form a correct idea of the cruelty with which this queen was treated. Scarcely any thing bearing the semblance of justice can be traced in the proceedings on her case. On the 2d of May she was committed to the Tower; she was tried on the 15th, and found guilty on the evidence of one witness, who deposed that he had heard the late lady Wingfield swear before her death that the queen had had a criminal correspondence with her brother and four other gentlemen, during the time she was in her majesty's service. On this one evidence alone she was beheaded on the 20th of May, 1536. Thus fell the virtuous, though indiscreet, queen Ann Boleyn, a martyr to the perfidious conduct of a popish party in the court of Henry VIII. Soon after the execution of this queen, and the celebration of his marriage with lady Jane Seymour, which was on the following day, the king convened a parliament, to set aside

the succession of the lady Elizabeth, her daughter, and empower him, in case of failure of his male heirs, to nominate his successor by his last will and testament. The parliament was entirely at the king's service, and consequently empowered him to pronounce both his daughters illegitimate ; but, as the king had to settle the succession, they both entertained hopes, and quietly submitted to their father's pleasure. The chief impediment which the popish party had now in the way of a reconciliation with the emperor was that of lady Mary having been pronounced illegitimate. In hope of ultimately effecting an accommodation with the pope, this party urged the king to have the act pronouncing her illegitimacy repealed, on her submission. The king so far consented as to allow her to state her submission to him in writing. She expressed her submission in general terms, confessing her former obstinacy and perverseness, and engaging to submit to the laws respecting the succession. But all this would not avail. The king insisted that she should acknowledge his marriage with her mother was incestuous and unlawful, that she would renounce the pope's authority, and recognise his majesty as supreme head of the church of England. These were hard terms to the princess, who from infancy had been taught the reverse, and she tried by every method she could devise to evade so explicit a renunciation of her faith. But the king would admit of nothing short of an absolute submission on the points required. The con-

science and judgment of Mary rose repugnant to every article the king required her to acknowledge; but by the advice of the guides of her conscience, who could easily absolve her from the guilt of perfidy, when such an act became necessary to promote the interest of the church of Rome, she, with her own hand, wrote a paper to her father, in which she owned him for her sovereign and the supreme head of the church of England,—renounced all the authority of the pope of Rome, and acknowledged the marriage of the king with her mother to be incestuous and unlawful.

When the pope was informed of the part which his agents had acted, he expressed his unqualified approbation of their conduct, and entered into a treaty with Cassali, to promote an accommodation. He desired him to inform his majesty that he had always favoured his cause during the pontificate of his predecessor; and, though he had so yielded to the necessity of his affairs as to pronounce sentence against him, he never intended to put it into execution. But Henry was not only pleased with his new title of supreme head of the church, but he had found the fruits of Peter-pence so sweet to his taste that he would listen to no terms of accommodation. No sooner had the pope given up the last lingering hope of reconciling Henry than he endeavoured to unite and engage all the princes of Christendom in a war against him, as a heretic and deserter from the true church.

Complaint being made at court of the diversity of doctrines delivered in the pulpits, the king sent a circular letter to the bishops, forbidding all preaching till Michaelmas, by which time certain articles of religion, most catholic, should be proposed. These articles were composed by a committee of bishops and other learned men, under the immediate direction of the king. After many meetings and much debate, the commissioners finished their work, each party relinquishing some of their peculiar opinions in order to preserve others. This ritual consisted of two parts: the first contained the doctrines necessary to be believed; and the second, the ceremonies proper to be observed to promote devotion. In the first, the people were required to believe every thing contained in the Scriptures, in the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene and Athanasian creeds; the three sacraments of baptism, of penance, and of the altar, are explained, and declared necessary to salvation. In the explanation of baptism, the necessity of baptizing infants is asserted, and re-baptism is pronounced a damnable heresy. In the explanation of penance, auricular confession to a priest is made necessary to salvation; and the people are taught to give no less credence to the words of absolution pronounced by the priest than to the very words and voice of God himself, if he should speak unto them out of heaven. In explaining the sacrament of the altar, the doctrine of transubstantiation is stated in the strongest terms that could be em-

ployed. The first part concludes with an explanation of the doctrine of justification, nearly the same as that which is now held by all protestant churches. In the second part, which treats of ceremonies, images were to be retained in churches, and the people were permitted to present offerings to them,—to kneel, and to burn incense before them; but they were to be taught that this should not be done to the images themselves, which is due to God only; “for else there might fortune of idolatry ensue, which God forbid.” But was it a probable means of preventing idolatry, to teach the people to present offerings, kneel, and burn incense before images to the honour of God? Saints were to be honoured, but not with that confidence and honour that are due to God; it was only deemed proper to implore them to intercede for us with Almighty God. The people were instructed “to pray for souls departed, and to commit them in our prayers to God’s mercy, and also to cause others to pray for them in masses, by giving alms for their prayers offered for the dead, whereby they may be relieved of their pains.” The policy of this clause is very apparent; by giving alms to pray for the dead, the emoluments of the clergy were secured. These ceremonies were all to be observed by the people, but they were to be informed, at the same time, “that none of these ceremonies have power to remit sin, but only to stir and lift up our minds unto God, by whom alone our sins may be forgiven.” These articles were published by the king’s au-

thority, and were to be implicitly observed by all his subjects.

From the preceding statement it appears that, though several of the anti-scriptural doctrines and ceremonies of the church of Rome were retained, some important points were gained by the friends of the Reformation. The Scriptures and the three ancient creeds were made the standards of doctrine, without any mention of tradition. Four of the seven sacraments were omitted; purgatory was left doubtful; pilgrimages were not enjoined; and several other things were explained and qualified. But neither party was satisfied with these articles. The papists complained that too much of the former system was relinquished, and the Reformers were equally dissatisfied that so much of it was retained; but notwithstanding their mutual dissatisfaction they were subscribed by both houses of convocation.

The clergy in England, who lived in the most criminal indolence, were greatly mortified at the injunctions proposed by archbishop Cranmer, and published by Thomas Lord Cromwell, the king's vicar-general. In these injunctions, all rectors, vicars, and curates, are commanded to preach in each quarter of the year, at least one sermon; in which they were to declare "purely and sincerely the very Gospel of Christ; and in the same exhort their hearers to works of charity, mercy, and faith, specially prescribed and commanded in Scripture; and not to repose their trust and affiance in any

other works devised by men's fantasies, beside Scripture; such as, wandering on pilgrimages, offering of money, candles, or tapers, to images or relics, or kissing or licking the same. If ye have heretofore declared to your parishioners any thing to the extolling or setting forth pilgrimages, feigned relics, or images,—or any such superstition, ye shall now openly before the same recant and reprove the same; showing them, as the truth is, that ye did the same upon no ground of Scripture, but as one led and seduced by a common error and abuse crept into the church, through the sufferance and avarice of such as felt profit by the same."* No injunctions could be more disagreeable than these were to the majority of the clergy, who still retained a cordial affection for all the gainful tenets of the church of Rome. Some of the clergy read them over in such an improper manner that they were not understood; and, when an explanation was asked in private, they generally advised their people to do as their fathers had done, for the old way was by far the best.

The ecclesiastical authorities at Rome were not indifferent observers of Henry's proceedings. The pope tried to make an impression by threatening the king, and exciting the clergy to rebellion; but, when he found that these measures failed in their effects, he summoned the king to appear at a general council to meet at Mantua. The king having objected to attend, or submit his cause to

* See Wilkin, p. 816, 817. Strype's Cranmer, p. 70.

such a council, published the following reasons; and it was moved that the convocation should give an opinion upon it:—"That as nothing was better instituted by the ancient fathers, for the establishment of the faith, the extirpation of heresies, the healing of schisms, and the unity of the Christian church, than general councils, gathered in the Holy Ghost, and duly called to an indifferent place,—on the other hand, nothing could produce more pestiferous effects than a general council called upon private malice, or ambition, or other carnal respects. It ought therefore to be considered, first, who had authority to call one. Secondly, if the reasons for calling one were sufficiently weighty. Thirdly, who should be the judges. Fourthly, what should be the manner of proceeding. Fifthly, what things should be treated of in it. As to the first of these, it was stated that neither the pope, nor any one prince, of what dignity soever, had authority to call one, without the consent of all other Christian princes, especially such as had entire and supreme government over all their subjects." This was signed by lord Cromwell, Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, fourteen bishops, and forty abbots, priors, and clerks, of the convocation of Canterbury.

The king published a spirited protest against the council at Mantua, proving that the pope has no power to call a general council,—that the power which in former times was vested in the emperor to call a general council was now ex-

tended to all Christian princes,—that a free general council could not be held while a war was carrying on between the emperor and the French king,—that the pope had no jurisdiction in England, consequently could summon none of this nation to such a meeting,—that it would be very unsafe for any Englishman to go to Mantua, as no dependence could be placed on the pope's safe conduct, their oaths and promises of protection having so frequently been broken,—that for three years past the pope had been exciting all Christian princes against him, and employing all possible means to raise rebellion among his subjects. He positively declared that he would not attend any council called by the bishop of Rome; but that, when there was a general peace among Christian princes, he would most gladly hearken to the motion of a true general council, and in the mean time he would preserve all the articles of the faith in his kingdom, and sooner lose his life and his crowns than suffer any of them to be violated.

After the suppression of the smaller monasteries, great numbers of monks and friars wandered through the country, publicly haranguing the people, and inflaming their minds against the king and his measures, until they had fomented two formidable insurrections. The one that broke out in Lincolnshire was happily quelled without the shedding of blood; but that in Cumberland was attended with the loss of many lives. The treacherous conduct of the monks furnished the king with a

favourable pretext for suppressing the rest of the monasteries. Commissioners were appointed, and particular instructions given how they were to proceed in every visitation. They had liberty to examine on oath the governor or any of the household officers, in order to ascertain how many religious persons there were in the house, what number of priests, how many would take capacities and go into the world,—to estimate the value of the house and premises,—to deposit the seal and writings of the convent in a sure place,—to take an inventory of all the plate and moveables, &c., &c.

To prevent a further exposure of the base impositions and corruptions of the church of Rome, the reports made by these commissioners were all erased out of the records in the reign of queen Mary. The fact is almost incredible that, in the short space of two years, all the possessions of six hundred and forty-five convents, ninety colleges, two thousand three hundred and seventy-four chantries and free chapels, and one hundred and ten hospitals, were annexed to the crown. The yearly revenues of their lands was estimated at £160,000, which, in the opinion of bishop Burnet, was little more than a tenth part of their real value. The jewels, plate, &c., belonging to these houses must have amounted to an immense sum. In many of the richer monasteries, their vestments were made of gold cloth, silk, and velvet richly embroidered; their crucifixes, images, candlesticks, &c., were of gold and silver. The gold taken from

the shrine of Thomas à Becket at Canterbury filled two chests, which contained as much as eight strong men could carry. A considerable portion of the jewels and plate was conveyed away from some of the monasteries before their dissolution, and probably some of it was secreted by those who had charge of it, but, after all, immense quantities came into the king's treasury.

The abolition of the monastic orders in England, and the alienation of their property, was a bold measure, the propriety and justice of which have often been called in question. But, while this circumstance marks the determined character of the king, it exhibits with equal clearness the superior abilities and wisdom of his vicegerent Cromwell, in clearing the nation of those nurseries of idleness, vice, and superstition, in which were fostered such powerful impediments to the Reformation.

A very spirited pamphlet appeared about this time, addressed to the king, entitled, "The Supplication of Beggars." It was written by a Mr. Fish, who, to avoid the violent proceedings of the lord chancellor, Sir Thomas More, fled to the continent, where his book was published, and a great number of copies were sent into England, to be distributed at the procession in Westminster on Candlemas-day. One of these books was read to the king, who after hearing it made a long pause, and then said, "If a man should pull down an old stone wall, and begin at the lower part, the upper part might chance to fall upon his head."

The king was so far from being displeased with the writer that he took him under his protection; and it is probable that the statements in this book, as will appear from the following extracts, might furnish Henry with arguments for suppressing the monasteries.

The book purports to be the prayer of the "needy, impotent, blind, lame, and sick beggars," who bitterly complain that there is another sort, "not of impotent, but of strong and counterfeit holy, and idle beggars and vagabonds," who are increased not only into a great number, but into a kingdom. "These are not the shepherds, but ravenous wolves in sheep's clothing, devouring the flock,—bishops, abbots, priors, deacons, archdeacons, suffragans, priests; monks, canons, friars, pardoners, and summers. These, having laid aside all labour, have begged so importunately that they have gotten into their own hands more than a third part of all your majesty's realm! The best lordships, manors, lands, and territories are theirs. Besides this, they have the tenth part of all the corn, meadow, pasture, grass, wood, colts, calves, lambs, pigs, geese, and chickens; also, the tenth part of every servant's wages, the tenth part of wool, milk, wax, cheese, and butter; and so strictly do they look after their profit that the poor wife must furnish them with every tenth egg, or she will not get her rights at Easter, and will be treated as an heretic. What money they pull in by probates of testaments, privy tithes, by

men's offerings to their pilgrimages, and at their first masses ! For every one that is buried, something must be paid for masses and dirges to be sung for him, or the friends and executors will be charged with heresy ! What money they get by mortuaries, by hearing confessions, by hallowing churches, altars, super-altars, chapels, and bells, by cursing men, and absolving them again for money ! Finally, the infinite number of begging friars, what get they in a year ! ”

“ There, if it please your grace to mark, you will see a thing far out of joint. There are within your realm of England 52,000 householders. And of every householder each of the five orders of friars receive a penny a quarter ; that is, for all the five orders, twenty pence a year of every house, making a total of £43,333. 6s. 4d. per annum sterling, whereof not four hundred years ago they had not one penny ! ”

“ O grievous exaction, thus yearly to be paid, from which the people of your noble predecessors, the kings of the ancient Britons, ever stood free ! And this they will have, or cause him that will not give it to be taken and treated as an heretic. What tyrant ever oppressed the people like this cruel and vengeable generation ! How can the people help their prince, who are oppressed by such a yearly taxation ? Is it to be wondered at that the taxes, fifteenths, and subsidies, demanded by your grace to defend the commonwealth from threatened ruin, have been collected with so much

difficulty, seeing the uttermost penny has been gathered before by this insatiable generation? Neither the Saxons nor Danes, in the time of the ancient Britons, could ever have brought their armies into this land, and have conquered it, if they had had such a number of gluttons to feed at home. The noble King Arthur had never been able to carry his army to the foot of the mountains, to resist the coming down of Lucis the emperor, if such yearly exactions had been taken of his people. The Greeks could not have continued so long at the siege of Troy, if they had had such a number of idle cormorants to feed at home. The ancient Romans could never have put the whole world under their government, if their people had been thus yearly oppressed. Nor would the Turk in your time ever have got so much of Christendom if in his empire there had been such a swarm of locusts to devour his substance. Add the above sums to the third part of the landed property which they possess, and see if it will not amount to more than one-half of the substance of the realm."

"Let us now compare the number of this unkind, idle sort, with the number of lay people; and if we include men, women, and children, they are not more than the four-hundredth part, and yet devour more than one-half of the wealth of the nation. Was there ever any commonwealth so oppressed since the world began!"

"And what do all these sturdy, idle, holy thieves, with these yearly exactions that they take of the

people? Nothing but translate all rule, power, lordships, authority, and obedience, from your grace to themselves. Yea, and what do they more? By their abstaining from marriage, they become incontinent, and fill the land with their bastards, so that no man can know his own child. These be they that have made a hundred thousand idle prostitutes in the realm, who would have got their living honestly, had not their superfluous riches enticed them to unclean lust and idleness. These be they who have drawn men's wives away from their husbands, and have brought both man, wife, and children to idleness, theft, and beggary. It is impossible to enumerate all the evils this mischievous generation may bring upon us, and yet they pass unpunished."

"Where is your sword, power, crown, and dignity, that should punish with death, as other men are punished, the felonies, rapes, murders, and treasons committed by this sinful generation? Where is their obedience, that should be under your high power in this matter? Is it not altogether translated from your grace unto them? There have been more breaches of matrimony committed by them than among all the heathen since the world began. Who is she that will set her hands to work for three pence a-day, when she can have at least twenty pence for sleeping an hour with a friar, a monk, or a priest? How many thousands, for the sake of a living, have married priests' ladies, that they might cloak the priests' inconti-

nency, who but for this excessive treasure of the spirituality would have gotten their living by honest industry? What honest man dare take either man or woman into his service who has been at such a school with a spiritual man?"

"O the grievous shipwreck of the commonwealth, which in ancient times was so prosperous! Before the coming of these ravenous wolves, theft was so rare that Cæsar was not compelled to make penalty of death upon felony, as your grace may see in his institutes. But is it to be wondered at that there are now so many beggars, thieves, and idle people? Nay, truly. What remedy? Make laws against them! I am in doubt whether you be able. Are they not stronger in your own parliament-house than yourself? What a number of bishops, abbots, and priors, are lords of your parliament! Do they not keep all the learned men of your realm in fee, to speak for them in your parliament-house, against your crown, dignity, and commonwealth, a few of your own learned council only excepted? What law can be made against them that will be available? Who is he that for the murder of his ancestor, ravishment of his wife or daughter, robbery, trespass, maim, debt, or any other offence, dare lay it to their charge by any way of action? If he do, then by their wiliness he is accused of heresy, and must either bear a faggot for their pleasure or else be excommunicated, and then all the actions are quashed. So much are they above the laws, that they have only to excommunicate a man to prevent

him suing an action in any of your courts. Your grace may see what work there is in London; how the bishop rageth because certain curates were indicted for extortion and incontinency. Had not Richard Hunne, lately burnt for heresy, commenced an action of *premunire* against a priest, he had been yet alive, and no heretic at all, but an honest man. What law can be made so strong that they will not, either with money or policy, break or set at nought? What kingdom can possibly stand that is thus annually giving, and receiveth nothing in return? O how all the substance of your realm, your sword, power, crown, dignity, and obedience of your people, runneth headlong into the insatiable whirlpool of these greedy gulps, to be swallowed and devoured!"

"But on what plea do they gather these yearly exactions? They say that they pray to God to deliver our souls out of the pains of purgatory, without whose prayers, or at least without the pope's pardon, we never could be delivered. If this doctrine be true, the benefit would be cheap, though it cost a hundred times more. But there be many men of great literature and judgment, who, for the love they have to the truth, have not feared to expose themselves to the severest punishments and death, for giving it as their opinion that there is no purgatory,—that it is an invention of the spirituality, of which not one word is spoken in the holy Scripture. They say, further, that if there were a purgatory, and that

the pope could for money deliver *one* soul out of purgatory, then, if he chose, he could deliver him as well without money ; and, if he could deliver *one*, he might, if he were so charitably disposed, deliver a *thousand* ; and, if a thousand, then he might deliver them *all*, and so at once destroy purgatory ; and that he must be a cruel tyrant, without charity, to keep souls in pain and torment until he be paid for their release. They say the same of all the spirituality ; that if they will pray for no man without money, and will suffer those souls to be tormented for want of their prayers, they are tyrants without one spark of real charity." We shall close our extract from the *Beggars' Supplication*, by giving the last paragraph.

" But what remedy to relieve us poor sick and lame beggars ? To make more hospitals for the relief of the poor ! Nay, truly. The more the worse ; for the fat of the whole foundation hangeth on the priests' beards. Several of your noble predecessors, kings of this realm, have given lands to monasteries, to give a certain sum of money to the poor annually, of which the poor never receive one penny. If the abbot of Westminster should sing every day as many masses for his founders as he is bound to by the tenure of their bequests, he would find full employment for a thousand monks. Wherefore, if your grace will build a sure hospital to relieve all us, your poor beggars, then *take from them all these things*.

" Send these sturdy loobies into the world, to

take wives of their own, and get their living by their labour, and thereby set an example to other idle people to work also. And, if these holy idle thieves will not act like honest men, tie them to the carts, and whip them through every market town till they fall to labour. By these means you will soon reduce the number of bawds, whores, thieves, and other idle people. Then shall these great yearly exactions cease; then shall not your sword, power, crown, dignity, and obedience of your people be translated from you; then shall the idle people be set to work; then shall matrimony be much better kept; then shall the generation of your people be increased; then shall the Gospel be preached; then shall your commons increase in riches; then shall none beg our alms from us; then shall we have enough, and more than will suffice us, which shall be the best hospital that ever was founded for us; then shall we daily pray to God for your most noble estate long to endure."

A number of the vilest impostures, consisting of counterfeit relics and mechanical images, were discovered when the larger monasteries were suppressed. The one found at Boxley, in Kent, may serve as a specimen. It was a crucifix that sometimes moved the head, the eyes, and bent the whole body to express the receiving of prayers; and was made to perform other gestures to indicate their rejection. A person of the name of Partridge suspected the fraud, and, by removing the image, exposed the whole apparatus, which consisted of a

number of springs, by which all its movements were performed. It was afterwards removed to Maidstone, where the imposition was publicly exposed. From thence it was taken to London, where all the machinery was exposed and its various movements performed before the king and his court. His majesty's council directed the bishop of Rochester to preach a sermon on the occasion at St. Paul's, where the whole apparatus was publicly exposed; when, to express their abhorrence of the imposture, the whole image was cast into a large fire, and burned.*

It was generally believed that King Henry had a stronger affection for his queen, Jane Seymour, than he had for either of his two former queens. Not long after her marriage, she afforded him prospect of legitimate issue, and on the 12th of October, 1537, she gave birth to a son at Hampton Court. The king was transported with pleasure at this event, and in every part of the kingdom demonstrations of joy were expressed by his loyal subjects. A disputed succession is one of the severest national calamities, from which the kingdom was now happily relieved by the birth of a prince. The baptism of the prince was celebrated with great splendour on the fifteenth of October, and he was named Edward. The sponsors were archbishop Cranmer, the duke of Norfolk, and the princess Mary. But the joy of the court occasioned by the birth of the prince was soon

* Burnet, vol. iii. p. 160, 161.

converted into mourning by the death of the queen, which melancholy event took place twelve days after she had given birth to the prince. It was well for this queen that she did not outlive the love of her vacillating husband; for he appeared to be greatly affected by her death.

Though Henry had emancipated both himself and his subjects from the dominion of the pope, his attachment to some of the absurd tenets of the church of Rome remained unabated, particularly to that of transubstantiation; and those who called the truth of that doctrine in question he persecuted with as much cruelty as the pope possibly could. The first on whom the weight of his ire fell was one John Nicolson, who, to avoid the fury of his former persecutors, had assumed the name of Lambert, and taught a school in London. Lambert one day heard Dr. Taylor preach a sermon to prove the real presence of Christ in the eucharist. After the sermon, Lambert gave the doctor a paper containing a number of reasons against the doctrine. Taylor took the paper to archbishop Cranmer, who at that time was a Lutheran, and he charged Lambert with heresy for denying the corporal presence of Christ in the sacrament. Lambert unhappily appealed to the king as the supreme head of the church of England; who, vain of his theological learning, and instigated by Bishop Gardiner, a most artful and cruel man, determined to bring the accused to a solemn trial in Westminster Hall. On the day appointed, the

king appeared in great state, clothed in white and seated under a canopy of the same colour, to denote the purity of his faith. A vast concourse of spiritual lords and temporal peers attended, to witness this extraordinary trial. The sight of this august assembly, and the stern countenance of the king, who commanded one of the bishops to announce the occasion of the meeting, almost enervated the poor prisoner. The king opened the business by railing at the prisoner for changing his name, and asked him, "Dost thou believe in the real corporal presence of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament of the altar?" Lambert replied, "I believe, with St. Augustine, the presence of Christ in the sacrament, in a certain manner." The king, in a passionate tone, commanded him to give a direct answer to the question. Lambert fell upon his knees and began to praise the king for condescending to hear one of the humblest of his subjects, when Henry interrupted him by saying he did not come there to hear his own praises, and commanded him instantly to answer his question, which he did, by openly declaring that he did not believe the corporal presence of Christ in the sacrament. Ten bishops had been appointed to manage this debate, of whom Cranmer was the first. He endeavoured to convince Lambert that a body may be in more places than one at the same time, from our Saviour's appearing to Paul at his conversion. But Bishop Gardiner, thinking that Cranmer was dealing too

gently with him, began to urge the same argument with all that vehement asperity for which he was so noted. He was followed in the debate by six other prelates, who all argued for the corporal presence from various topics. Lambert answered all his opponents in order, with great acuteness and strength of argument, though he was often interrupted, insulted, and ridiculed. At length, being exhausted with standing five hours, and disputing with so many antagonists, he for a time remained silent. The king then asked him, "Will you live or die?" Lambert replied, "I commit my soul to the mercy of God, and my body to the mercy of your majesty." "I will have no mercy on heretics," said the king in a rage, and commanded Cromwell to read the sentence, which condemned the prisoner to be burnt as an obstinate heretic. This unjust sentence was executed in Smithfield, A. D. 1538, with circumstances of uncommon cruelty. The last words he uttered in the flames were, "None but Christ; none but Christ." The conduct of Cranmer on this occasion has been severely animadverted upon, as if he had argued against the convictions of his own mind, and thereby facilitated the martyrdom of this good man. But this is a great mistake; there is sufficient evidence to prove that for several years after this time Cranmer was a firm believer in the corporal presence, as that doctrine is held by the Lutheran church.

Though Henry's bigoted attachment to some of

the dogmas of the church of Rome led him to sacrifice the lives of several of his innocent subjects, yet in some of his proceedings he greatly promoted the cause of the Reformation. The Romish calendar was crowded with saints, and the number of holidays greatly impeded industry, and promoted idleness and riot. He issued a proclamation, commanding all the holidays to be abolished in harvest, from the 1st of July to the 29th of September, three only excepted. He commanded all the feasts of the dedication of all the churches in England, commonly called *wakes*, to be kept in one day, the first Sunday in October, and prohibited the observation of the feasts of the patrons of churches. This proclamation was sent to all the bishops, with a letter from the king commanding them to see it put in execution in their respective dioceses. The bishops enforced its observance by several subsequent injunctions; and thereby rescued a number of days from riot to useful labour. Whilst Henry was correcting some of the abuses in the church, he not only reduced the number of saint-days, but actually uncanonized one of the most popular saints the pope ever made. The following is the king's account of this memorable act, as given by Burnet:—"That it appearing clearly that Thomas à Becket, some time archbishop of Canterbury, did stubbornly withstand the laws established against the enormities of the clergy, by King Henry the second, and had fled out of the realm into France, and to the

bishop of Rome, to procure the abrogating of these laws, from which there arose great troubles in the kingdom,—his death, which they untruly call his martyrdom, happened upon a rescue made by him, upon which he gave opprobrious words to the gentlemen who counselled him to leave his stubbornness, and not to stir up the people who were risen for that rescue: he called one of them bawd, and pulled Tracy by the bosom almost down to the pavement of the church. Upon this fray, one of the company struck him, and in the throng he was slain. He was canonized by the bishop of Rome, because he had been a champion to maintain his usurped authority, and a defender of the iniquity of the clergy. The king, with the advice of his council, did find that there was nothing of sanctity in the life or exterior conversation of Becket, but that he rather ought to be esteemed a *rebel* and a *traitor*; therefore he commands that he shall be no more esteemed or called a *saint*; that his images shall every where be put down, and that the days used for his festival shall be no more observed, nor any part of that service be read, but that it shall be razed out of all books. That the other festivals already abrogated shall be no more blindly abused to commit idolatry, as they have been in time past."

The joy experienced by the friends of the Reformation when his majesty gave his consent for all his subjects to enjoy the free use of the Scriptures, along with other books of piety, especially

the “Bishop’s Book, or the Godly and Pious Institution of a Christian Man,” was greatly abated, when, through the influence of the popish party, the king commanded the lord chancellor to publish the following message to the house of Lords:—“That it was his majesty’s desire, above all things, that the diversity of opinions concerning the Christian religion in his kingdom should be with all possible expedition plucked up and extirpated; and therefore, since this affair was of so extraordinary a nature that it could not well be determined in a short time, considering their various sentiments, by the whole house, the king thought it necessary, if it seemed good unto them, that they should choose a committee of themselves to examine into these different opinions; and whatever they decreed concerning them might be with all convenient speed communicated to the whole parliament.” With this message they complied, and a committee of ten members was chosen, five of the old and five of the new learning (as the Reformers were termed,) that they might appear to act impartially. But the measure they had adopted did not answer their expectations; for after a number of meetings, and many warm debates, they could come to no agreement on any of the points in dispute.

The duke of Norfolk was at the head of the popish party, and paid particular attention to the interests of his cause. Being high in the king’s favour, he obtained permission to propose a measure to the house of peers, which would bring the

subject to a more speedy and effectual conclusion than would be done by the committee. He then laid before the house the six following articles, to be examined by their lordships, and that their determination upon them should be formed into a law, to which all his majesty's subjects should be required to conform on certain penalties. The articles were,

1. Whether or not Christ's real body was present in the eucharist without transubstantiation.
2. Whether the sacrament should be given to the laity in both kinds or not.
3. Whether vows of chastity made by men or women ought to be observed by the law of God or not.
4. Whether, by the law of God, private masses ought to be celebrated.
5. Whether priests are authorized by the law of God to marry.
6. Whether auricular confession to a priest be necessary by the law of God.

Though these subjects were proposed by the duke of Norfolk, the general opinion was that they were formed by the king; and, as they were the great questions of dispute between the friends and enemies of the Reformation, by the parliament giving victory to the one, and imposing silence on the other, he should escape the imputation of heresy. The popish party had many advantages in having these questions discussed in parliament, it being well known that the king was decidedly in their favour. Though the king's influence was

irresistible, the other party did not tamely submit; for having scripture, reason, and the most ancient fathers on their side, they supported their opinions with great spirit, by which the proceedings were protracted to a great length. Archbishop Cranmer argued three days against these articles being established by act of parliament, with such eloquence and learning as excited the admiration and astonishment of his greatest enemies. But notwithstanding the goodness of his cause, and the masterly manner in which he supported it, he was thrown into the minority, and all the six questions were determined in conformity to the doctrines of the church of Rome. The parliament was prorogued for a week, and at their next meeting, May 30th, the lord chancellor reported to the house, "that it was his majesty's pleasure that some penal statute should be enacted, to compel all his subjects who were contraditors of these articles to obey them." Upon this message the house appointed the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishops of Ely and St. Asaph, with Dr. Petre, a master in Chancery, to prepare one bill, and the archbishop of York, the bishops of Durham and Winchester, with Dr. Trigonnell, also a master in Chancery, to prepare another. When the two bills were prepared they were presented to the king, on Sunday the 1st of June, 1539, when, as might be expected, preference was given to that prepared by the archbishop of York and his committee; for a great part of that bill had been drawn up by the king himself.

On the 7th of June this “bloody act,” as it is generally called, was brought into the house of peers, and was passed on the 10th. The king sent a message to Cranmer, desiring him not to be present that day, as he could not give his assent to the bill, but the archbishop replied that he had an important duty to perform, and was bound in conscience to be there to vote against it. The conduct of Cranmer on this occasion was truly heroic. He knew the temper of the king whose message he dared to disobey; yet he would risk the displeasure of this furious monarch rather than, by yielding to court etiquette, betray the interests of true religion. The bill passed the house of commons on the 16th of June, and received the royal assent on the 28th of the same month, being the last day of the session. The substance of this execrable act is as follows:—“That if any person by word, writing, printing, or any other way, denied or disputed the real presence of the natural body and blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, conceived by the Virgin Mary, in the blessed sacrament of the altar, after the consecration, under the form of bread and wine,—or that in the flesh, under the form of bread, is not the very blood of Christ,—or that with the blood, under the form of wine, is not the very flesh of Christ,—he was to be judged an heretic, and to suffer death by burning, and all his lands, goods, and chattels, were to be forfeited to the king, as in the case of high treason. If any affirmed or taught that communion in both

kinds was necessary,—or that vows of chastity were not binding,—or that private masses were not lawful and laudable,—or that auricular confession to a priest was not necessary,—he was to suffer death as a felon.” That the violators of this law might not escape its penalties, commissioners were appointed in every county to discover and apprehend all offenders against any part of the act. All ecclesiastical incumbents were to read the act in their churches once a quarter; and all archbishops, bishops, and chancellors were to hold their sessions quarterly for putting the same in execution.

The passing of this atrocious act produced very different effects on the parties concerned. The boundless exultation of the popish party could only be equalled by the consternation and dejection of the friends of the Reformation. Shaxton, bishop of Salisbury, and Latimer, bishop of Worcester, resigned their bishoprics, and retired; but were both imprisoned on being presented for speaking against the act. Latimer was kept in prison till the king’s death, but Shaxton apostatized through fear of the fire, and in the reign of queen Mary became a cruel persecutor of the protestants. Archbishop Cranmer was much dejected, and sent his wife to her friends in Germany. Though no man ever acted more under the impulse of excited passion, or could be more impatient of contradiction than Henry, yet he had a high regard for the personal worth and integrity of

Cranmer, and after the bill was passed he sent the duke of Norfolk and lord Cromwell to assure him of his esteem and favour.

The excessive joy of the popish party may be inferred from a letter which is still extant, written by a member of the house of peers to his friend, in which he says, “I assure you never prince showed himself so wise a man, so well learned, and so catholic, as the king hath done in this parliament. With my pen I cannot express his marvellous goodness, which is come to such effect, that we shall have an act of parliament so spiritual that I think none shall dare to say, in the blessed sacrament of the altar doth remain either bread or wine after consecration; nor that a priest may have a wife; nor that it is necessary to receive our Maker in both kinds; nor that private masses should not be said as they have been; nor that it is not necessary to have auricular confession. Finally, all in England have cause to thank God, and most heartily to rejoice of the king’s most godly proceedings.”*

The German ambassadors at the British court obtained an audience with the king, soon after the act was passed, and, in the name of their respective sovereigns, earnestly entreated him to suspend its execution, as the unhappy effects it would produce upon many of his majesty’s most loyal subjects would be a great grief to their masters. The king promised that it should not be acted

* Strype’s Cranmer, Appendix, No. 26.

upon without extraordinary provocation ; but it is evident that the commissioners appointed to put the act in execution did not wait for cases of aggravation, for within fourteen days they committed in London alone upwards of five hundred persons, among whom were most of the reforming preachers.

The king entertained a very high opinion of Melancthon, who was one of the most learned and moderate of the German reformers. He wrote a long and pathetic letter to the king expostulating with him on the severity of this law, exposing the artifices of Gardiner its chief promoter, and entreating him to pursue milder measures, as being more consistent with the spirit of Christianity. In this letter he says, “O impudent and wicked Winchester, who under these colourable fetches thinketh to deceive the eyes of Christ, and the judgments of all the godly in the world !—These things have I written that you may understand the crafty sleights, and so judge of the purpose and policy of these bishops.” The sentiments of this letter, together with the representations made by the lord chancellor Audley of the fatal effects of such rigorous measures, so wrought upon the mind of Henry that he commanded all the prisoners to be liberated. This act of the king checked for a time the violent proceedings of the commissioners in every part of the kingdom.

No monarch ever had a parliament devoted more absolutely to his will than the one king Henry now had. He had only to intimate to them

what was his will on any subject, and it immediately became the law of the land by act of parliament, even to the dispensing with their own services. This is fully corroborated by a remarkable act which was passed this session, relative to the obedience due to the king's proclamations. It enacts, "that the king, with the advice of his council, may set forth proclamations with pains and penalties, which shall be obeyed as fully as an act of parliament, provided they do not extend so far as that the subject should suffer in estate, liberty, or person."

The violent measures pursued under cover of the late acts of parliament were evidently the effects of different motives. The king was urged by the papal party to persecute with rigour those pronounced heretics, hoping thereby to facilitate his return to the Roman yoke. But Henry was actuated by other motives; he was vainly proud of his theological learning, and the "defender of the faith" wished to convince the world that, though he had cast off his connexion with the pope, he had not turned heretic. His conduct in the dissolution of the greater monasteries might furnish another motive for his rigorous proceedings against the Reformers, that the clamour raised against him by the monks, as an enemy to the church, might have the less weight both at home and abroad.

On the 23d of May, 1539, lord Cromwell brought a bill into the house of peers to empower the king

to erect new bishoprics, deaneries, and colleges, by letters patent, and endow them out of the suppressed monasteries. The peers were so pleased with the project that they passed the bill the same day; and the next day it went through the house of commons with equal despatch. Bishop Burnet had seen a draught of the preamble of this bill, written in the king's own hand, to which was annexed, in the same hand, a scheme of eighteen new bishoprics, as many deaneries, and several colleges, the places where they were to be erected, and the monasteries out of which they were to be endowed. What the king had projected he doubtless intended to execute, but he had previously made so many liberal grants of the lands, and had squandered away so much of the money, that he only found means to erect six, instead of eighteen new bishoprics. He also built a few forts and castles on the coast, which was all the benefit the country derived from the immense treasures of the suppressed monasteries.

It is doubtful whether a greater diversity of opinion has been formed on any part of Henry's conduct than that which has prevailed in regard to his suppression of the religious houses. Some endeavour to justify him on the ground that these establishments were become nurseries for superstition and immorality; whilst others have branded his character with all the hard names they could associate with sacrilege. Looking at the historical facts of the case as they stand, we must conclude that,

whatever advantages may have arisen out of that act, no merit is due to the mercenary motive by which Henry was actuated. The manner in which he disposed of the property that had been solemnly consecrated to the service of God, however it might have been abused by those into whose hands it had fallen, has fixed upon his character an indelible stain.

Of all the monstrous projects of Henry VIII. none disgrace his name more for being irrational and cruel than that which he laid before his parliament in 1541. The purport of it was to compel all his subjects to entertain exactly the same opinions on every article of religion, and observe a perfect uniformity in their religious worship. For the accomplishment of this object, two committees were to be appointed; one to prepare a system of doctrines to be believed, and the other to settle the religious rites and ceremonies which all must uniformly observe in their worship. The parliament, as usual, unanimously approved of the scheme, and appointed the committees to meet on the business every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, in the forenoon, and every day in the afternoon except Sunday. But such was the diversity of opinion among the men who were met to prescribe bounds, beyond which other men's opinions were not allowed to pass, that after all their long and close application, in which they were assisted by the king himself, they could not determine upon what the people should either believe or practise, so as to present their work before the dissolution of parliament.

The committees' not having finished their work would have been an unfortunate circumstance for Henry, had not his pliant parliament passed a law, by which it was enacted,—“that whatsoever was determined by the archbishops, and bishops, and other divines now commissioned for that effect, or by any other appointed by the king, and published by the king's authority, concerning the Christian faith or the ceremonies of the church, should be believed and obeyed by all the king's subjects, as well as if the particulars so set forth had been enumerated in this act.”* Henry's arbitrary proceedings, and the conduct of his pusillanimous parliament, were followed by a number of severe acts of persecution.

One of the first victims of their cruelty was Thomas Cromwell, earl of Essex, prime minister and confidential favourite of Henry VIII. The earl was the son of a blacksmith at Putney, and rose to his high station by his own merit. He was the real friend of true religion, and all his influence in the cabinet, as far as circumstances would admit, was brought to bear in favour of the Reformation, which was the cause of his untimely fate. In his zeal to promote the protestant interest, he accomplished the unhappy marriage of Henry with Ann of Clives, whose friends were all Lutherans. Cromwell was both a good man and an able minister; but, like all others who hold high offices in the state, he had a great number of enemies.

* Burnet, book iii., Records, No. 21.

The nobility looked upon him as if he had deprived them of their prerogatives, by being raised from so low a station to enjoy offices, titles, and emoluments above them all; while the popish party hated him for the active part he had taken in the suppression of the abbeys and monasteries and the destruction of images and reliques, and the countenance and support he gave to protestantism. It is generally admitted that he was a great politician, but, like most statesmen, he was guilty of some great errors. In his zeal to promote the Reformation, he introduced the unjustifiable mode of attaingder in cases of treason and heresy; and his enemies, having preferred certain complaints against him, availed themselves of his own law. The rapid steps by which this minister mounted to the highest offices and honours in the state were only equalled by his sudden and unexpected fall. He was sitting in the council chamber on the 10th of June, unconscious of either guilt or danger, when the duke of Norfolk accused him of high treason, arrested him in the king's name, and carried him through the streets of London, at three o'clock in the afternoon, to the Tower, followed by an immense concourse of people, hissing and cursing the fallen minister. Of all his former friends, not one dared to plead his cause except archbishop Cranmer, who, in a long letter to the king, enumerated the many good qualities of Cromwell, and insisted on the impossibility that one who loved his king as he loved his God, and had served him so long with

such fidelity, zeal, and success, could be guilty of high treason. He closed his letter by telling the king, that “he was such a servant in wisdom, diligence, faithfulness, and experience, as no prince in this realm ever had.”* This appeal to the king did not, however, prevent the passing of a bill of attainder against Thomas Cromwell, earl of Essex, for the crimes of heresy and high treason. The preamble to the bill begins thus:—“That the king having raised Thomas Cromwell from a base degree to great dignities and high trusts, yet he had now, by a great number of witnesses—persons of honour—found him to be the most corrupt traitor and deceiver of the king and the crown that had ever been known in his whole reign.”

After this act of attainder had passed both houses of parliament, and received the royal assent, Cromwell wrote several letters to the king, imploring mercy. With one of these letters he was much affected; he commanded it to be read to him three times, and appeared just on the point of relenting. But the charms of Catherine Howard, and the importunities of Norfolk and Gardiner, at length prevailed, and an order was given for beheading him; which order was executed on Tower-Hill, July 28th, with circumstances of peculiar barbarity. Thus fell Thomas Cromwell, earl of Essex, a sacrifice to his popish enemies and the passions of a capricious tyrant. He certainly was one of the wisest and most upright

* Herbert, page 223.

ministers that had ever served a king of England. It is to him we are indebted for the institution of parish registers of births, marriages, and burials.

The loss sustained by the Reformers, through the fall of Cromwell, was followed by the martyrdom of a number of their most learned and zealous ministers. Two days after the execution of Cromwell, Dr. Robert Barnes, Thomas Garret, and William Hierome, were burnt in Smithfield, being condemned for heresy, on the act of the six articles; and at the same time and place three papists, Powel, Fetherstone, and Abell, were hanged, drawn, and quartered, being found guilty of treason for denying the king's supremacy; which induced a foreigner, who witnessed the horrid scene, to exclaim, "Good God! how unhappy are the people of this country, who are hanged for being papists, or burnt for being enemies to popery." It was about this period that Dr. Edmund Bonner began to act a conspicuous part in the affairs of the church. For the zealous manner in which he had advocated the king's cause against the pope, on the recommendation of Cromwell, secretary of state, he was promoted to the see of Hereford; but, before his consecration, he was translated by archbishop Cranmer to the see of London. The honest secretary of state and the unsuspecting archbishop were both deceived by Bonner, who was a bold, ambitious, unprincipled, and cruel man. He was placed at the head of the commissioners for

executing the act of the six articles in London; and, finding the interest of the popish party to prevail at court, he acted with great cruelty against the Reformers. Numbers were burnt to ashes, and multitudes were imprisoned and reduced to the greatest distress, by the violent proceedings of the commissioners. The influence of archbishop Cranmer was now rapidly declining with the king, whose imperious temper, being rendered more irritable through age, could rarely be approached by any but the adulator. The vacillancy of his conduct will appear from the following fact. On the 4th of October, 1541, he republished his injunctions for removing “out of cathedrals and other churches all shrines and images to which pilgrimages had been made, and offerings had been presented, with all tables recording pretended miracles,” as the former injunctions for that purpose had been very imperfectly executed; and about the same time he published a proclamation, commanding the festivals of several saints to be restored and observed which he had previously abolished.

A dangerous conspiracy was about this time formed against archbishop Cranmer, by the popish party, having at their head the duke of Norfolk, the bishops of Winchester and London, Thornden, suffragan of Dover and prebendary of Canterbury, with a number of others, all of whom had been raised by Cranmer, for their pretended zeal for the Reformation. They were aware that the death

of Cromwell had put a check to the Reformation, and, if Cranmer could be sent after him, it would effectually crush all further attempts at a reformation. They began by selecting passages out of the sermons and private discourses of those prebendaries and preachers whom they knew to be in the archbishop's favour. Upon these they founded a number of articles, in which they represented the archbishop, by his partiality to the men of the new learning, as the cause of all the commotions and divisions which had disturbed the peace of Canterbury, and various other parts of Kent. These articles were at last presented to the king, who soon after, passing by Lambeth, took the archbishop into his barge and told him he had just discovered who was the greatest heretic in Kent. He then showed him the articles preferred against himself and his chaplains. The archbishop prayed the king to appoint a commission to examine the affair. The king suspected that it was a scheme of Gardiner's to ruin him, and would therefore appoint none on the commission but Cranmer himself. He remarked on the suspicious appearance which his sitting alone in judgment on his own case must have; but the king said he knew his integrity, and could not be prevailed with to name more than one with him in the commission.

When the archbishop went into Kent to execute his commission under such special marks of the king's favour, it operated on the conspirators as an electric shock. Some trembled with fear,

others wept and begged pardon, and some were sent to prison. The tender-hearted archbishop only executed a part of the commission himself, and left the rest in the hands of those who were secretly favourers of the party. The court was made acquainted with the circumstances of the case, and informed that, unless Dr. Leigh were sent down, who was accustomed to examinations, the conspiracy would never be found out. The doctor was sent accordingly, and a course of examinations commenced, which soon discovered the whole train. Some of the principal informers were the archbishop's domestics, who, when charged with it, fell on their knees and with tears confessed their faults. The archbishop, whose gentleness was almost without a parallel, kindly said, that he not only forgave them, but prayed God to forgive them and make them better men. At the close of these examinations a number of them were sent to prison, but were set at liberty soon after by an act of parliament.

The king gave another proof of the high estimation in which he held the archbishop. Sir John Gostwick, knight for Bedfordshire, charged Cranmer, before the house of commons, with having preached against the sacrament of the altar, both at Feversham and Canterbury. When the king heard of this he sent for Gostwick, and in his rough manner called him a *varlet*, and commanded him to go and ask Cranmer's pardon, or he should feel the effects of his displeasure. The

king told him that if he had been a Kentish man he might have had some pretext for accusing him; but, being of Bedfordshire, he could have none. Sir John was so terrified with the king's conduct towards him that he lost no time in making his submission to Cranmer, who not only forgave him, but interceded for him with the king, and with difficulty obtained his restoration to favour.

The king's injunction, for a copy of the English translation of the Bible to be deposited in every church, with permission for private persons to have copies of it in their houses for the use of themselves and families, was very disagreeable to the popish part of the clergy. They complained of the laity for reading the Scriptures aloud to large concourses of people, and disputing and commenting upon them during the time of mass. They represented this abuse of the privilege as giving birth to all the new opinions (*heresies* as they called them) that prevailed. They also complained of the translation that it was not correct, and countenanced heresy. When these complaints were laid before the king, he determined either to set limits to the liberty or to take it entirely away; to prevent the latter, a remedy was suggested to his majesty by Cranmer. In January, 1542, a convocation met at St. Paul's, to both houses of which the archbishop delivered a message from the king, commanding the prelates and clergy to take into consideration the unsettled state of religion; to correct what required correction,

especially the English translation of the Old and New Testament. In the third session, held on the third of February, the important question was discussed, “Whether the great English Bible should continue to be used in the church or not.” The majority were of opinion that it could not be continued until it was revised and corrected. Before the convocation broke up, two committees of bishops and doctors were appointed, one to correct and revise the translation of the New and the other that of the Old Testament. The heads of both committees were against any English translation; and Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, in order to throw what difficulties he could in the way, presented a list of one hundred Latin and Greek words, the true sense of which, he said, could not be rendered into English, and proposed that they should be retained in the translation. The archbishop saw at once through this absurd proposition; to counteract which he obtained a mandate from the king to the convocation, commanding them to refer the revisal of the English Bible to the two universities, with which they very reluctantly complied.

The friends of popery have always endeavoured to prevent the circulation of the Scriptures in the vernacular language, well knowing that nothing could be more inimical to the interests of their church. The duke of Norfolk and the bishop of Winchester were at the head of the popish party, and, anticipating the advantages the Reformation would

derive from the free perusal of a revised copy of the Scriptures, determined, if possible, to prevent those effects. To accomplish their object, in 1543 they obtained an act of parliament, compelling the ministers to remove all the English Bibles out of the churches, and enacting that none under the rank of a gentleman should be allowed to have an English Bible in his possession, or to read it in private,—that no women or artificers, apprentices, journeymen, serving-men, husbandmen, or labourers, should read the New Testament in English,—that all the subjects of the realm were to regulate their faith and practice by the injunctions published and to be published by the king. The tender mercies of holy mother church are strikingly exhibited in the mild and lenient penalties annexed to the violation of this act for prohibiting the reading of the Scriptures. For the first offence, they were to recant,—for the second, to bear a faggot,—and for the third, they were to be burnt.*

On the twenty-ninth of May, 1543, was published that remarkable treatise, prepared by a committee of bishops and doctors, entitled, “A Necessary Erudition for a Christian Man, set forth by the King’s Majesty.” This wonderful performance, called the “King’s Book,” and recommended by both houses of parliament, was intended to supply the place of the Bible, of which the people had just been deprived, and also to put a period to all diversity of opinion on points of religion.

* Statutes, 34 Henry VIII. cap. 1.

The preface to this book was written by the king, and contains an epitome of the work, of which the following is an extract:—“ For knowledge of the order of the matter in this book contained :—Forasmuch as we know not perfectly God but by faith, the declaration of faith occupieth in this treatise the first place. Whereunto is next adjoining the declaration of the articles of our creed concerning what we should believe. And incontinently after them followeth the explication of the seven sacraments. Then followeth conveniently the declaration of the ten commandments, being by God ordained the highway wherein each man should walk in this life, to finish fruitly his journey here, and afterwards to rest eternally in joy with him ; which because we cannot do of ourselves, but have need always of the grace of God, as without whom we can neither continue in this life, nor without his special grace do any thing to his pleasure whereby to attain the life to come, we have, after the declaration of the ten commandments, expounded the seven petitions of our Pater-noster, wherein be contained requests and suits for all things necessary to a Christian man in this life ; with declaration of the Ave Maria, as a prayer containing a joyful rehearsal and magnifying God in the work of the incarnation of Christ, which is the ground of our salvation, wherein the blessed virgin, our lady, for the abundance of grace where-with God endowed her, is also with this remembrance honoured and worshipped. And foras-

much as the heads and senses of our people have been imbusied, and in these days travailed with the understanding of free will, justification, good works, and praying for souls departed, we have, by the advice of our clergy, for the purgation of erroneous doctrines, declared and set forth openly, and without ambiguity of speech, the mere and certain truth in them ; so as we verily trust that to know God, and how to live after his pleasure, to the attaining everlasting life in the end, this book containeth a perfect and sufficient doctrine, grounded and established in holy Scripture.”*

Bonner, bishop of London, published some injunctions to his clergy, which breathe a spirit so different from his own, that there is every reason to believe that their appearance was in compliance with a higher authority. By these injunctions every clergyman is required “to read a chapter in the Bible every day with some gloss upon it, and to study the book compiled by the bishops ; that no curates should be employed until they had been examined by him or his officers ; that they should instruct the children of their parishes in English, that they might know how to believe, and pray and live according to the will of God ; to endeavour to reconcile all who were at variance among their flocks ; to permit none to go to taverns, or use unlawful games on Sundays or holy-days, in time of divine service ; that the ministers should set before the people a proper example, by per-

* Strype’s Memoirs, p. 379.

forming the functions of their office decently, and by abstaining from taverns and gaming; that no plays nor interludes should be acted in their churches;* that in their preaching they should explain the gospel and epistle for the day according to the opinions of some learned doctors of the church, and endeavour to stir up the people to good works and prayer; that none should be permitted to preach who had not obtained a license from the king or bishop." Whilst popery prevailed in England, very few sermons were preached except in Lent, when the friars manifested great fervour in their discourses, the purport of which was to extol the laws and ceremonies of the church, without any reference to the Scriptures, or the doctrines of the gospel. The preaching of the Reformers was rendered very popular by their explaining the doctrines of Christianity, with which the people were very little acquainted.

The archbishop was extremely anxious to pre-

* The idea of plays, interludes, and scandalous comedies being acted in the churches, appears strange to those who are unacquainted with their origin. These plays were introduced by the lay friends of the Reformation, to expose the corruptions, impositions, and tricks, of the popular clergy, with all the mummeries and pageantry practised in the worship of the church of Rome. These exhibitions were as pleasing to the people, who had paid so dear for the tricks and cheats that had been imposed upon them, as they were galling to both the priest and laity of the popish party. They complained loudly of the abuse of places set apart for public worship, and of mimicking those solemnities still practised by many.

vent any being licensed as itinerant preachers but such as were sound in the faith of the gospel; but at that time a sufficient number of such characters could not be found to instruct all the people. To meet the exigencies of the case, a book of homilies was published on all the epistles and gospels for the year; to which were added some sermons on particular occasions, to be read by those who were not licensed to preach. The popish party made loud complaints to the king against the licensed preachers, for disseminating heresy among the people. To enable them to meet these charges, and justify themselves from such accusations, they began to write their sermons at full length, which appears to have given birth to the custom of reading sermons in the church of England.

To prevent any of his subjects from either thinking, speaking, or acting in public or private, in matters of religion, but as directed by the king, after he had dictated a system of doctrines to be believed, and of ceremonies to be practised in the church, he next published a manual of prayers, which he strictly commanded all his subjects to use, and none other, in their private devotions. This was called the king's Primer Book, in the preface of which he says, "Forasmuch as we have bestowed right great labour and diligence about settling a perfect stay in the other parts of our religion, we have thought good to bestow our earnest labour in this part also, being a thing as fruitful as the best, that men may know both what

they pray, and also with what words, lest things special good and principal, being inwrapped in ignorance of the words, should not perfectly come to the mind and to the intelligence of men; or else things being nothing to the purpose, nor very meet to be offered unto God, being the distributor of all gifts."*

The popish party were aware that all their efforts to stop the Reformation would prove ineffectual, unless they could effect the overthrow of the archbishop. The Kentish conspiracy having failed, another plot was planned against him, the scene of which was Windsor, where the king was spending the summer with his queen Catharine Parr, relict of lord Latimer. It was well known that the queen was Cranmer's sincere friend, and a zealous encourager of the Reformation. Under these circumstances, they were aware that a little delay might render all their efforts abortive. Bishop Gardiner and Dr. London were the projectors of this plot, and, as the doctor had taken an active part in the suppression of the monasteries under Cromwell, he found easy access to the friends of the Reformation. Through the influence of the popish party at court, Gardiner obtained a commission to search all suspected houses for books written against the act of the six articles. Dr. London having insinuated himself into the acquaintance of four people at Windsor, on his information their houses were searched; some books were found, said to have

* Wilkin, p. 873.

been written against the six articles, and, being accused of speaking against the mass, three of the four were condemned and burnt to ashes.

When the king was informed of the burning of the men at Windsor, he was very much displeased, but concealed his anger for the present, that he might the more effectually discover their designs against Cranmer. The king's apparent indifference in the above affair encouraged the duke of Norfolk, the bishop of Winchester, and the other popish members of the privy council, to wait upon the king, and represent to him that it was great injustice to prosecute poor and ignorant men with such severity, whilst the principal supporter of heresy held the highest post of dignity, and enjoyed his majesty's favour. They stated to the king that the archbishop and his learned men had so infected the whole land with their false doctrine, that three parts of the people were become abominable heretics. They requested the king's permission for the archbishop to be committed to the Tower until the affair could be examined, as the only means of checking the spread of the heretical contagion.

As the king appeared reluctant to grant their request, they urged further, "that the archbishop being one of the privy council, no man dared to object matter against him, unless he were first committed to durance; which being done, men would be bold to tell the truth and say their consciences." The king at last consented that

they might bring him before the council next morning and examine him; and, if they found sufficient cause, might commit him to the Tower. At midnight the king sent a messenger to the archbishop, desiring him to come and speak with him immediately. When Cranmer arrived, the king told him what complaint had been made, and the consent he had given, and then asked him, “What say you, my Lord; have I done well or ill?” The pious prelate meekly replied that he was quite willing to be tried for his doctrine; and then thanking the king for his kindness in giving him this timely warning, expressed his hope that his majesty would see that he was not unfairly dealt with. On hearing this the king exclaimed, “O Lord God! what fond simplicity have you, to permit yourself to be imprisoned, that every enemy of yours may take advantage against you! Do you not know that when once they have you in prison, three or four false knaves will soon be procured to witness against you and condemn you? No, not so my Lord; I have a better regard for you than to suffer your enemies to overthrow you. Appear before the council; require them to produce your accusers; and, if they refuse, show them this ring (giving him a ring), which they know to be used for no other purpose but to call matters from the council into mine own hands.” Early next morning Cranmer was sent for by the council. On his arrival he was not admitted into the council chamber, but kept standing among the servants

about an hour in the ante-chamber. When the king was informed of their conduct, he was very much offended, and exclaimed to his physician, "And have they served my lord so? It is very well; I shall talk with them by and by." When the archbishop was called into the council chamber, he was told that complaints had been exhibited to the king and them, that he and others by his permission had infected the whole realm with heresy, and that it was his majesty's pleasure that he should be committed to the Tower in order to his trial. Cranmer inquired who were his accusers? and demanded that before he was committed they should appear before him face to face. With this just demand the council refused to comply; when Cranmer said, "I am sorry, my lords, that you have compelled me to appeal from you to the king, who by this token (presenting the ring) hath taken this matter into his own hands." The sight of the ring produced an electrifying effect on the council; who, as soon as they were a little recovered from the shock, waited in a body on the king to restore his ring, and resign the cause into his hands. The king received them with a stern countenance, and reproved them severely for their unjust and contemptuous treatment of the archbishop. "I would," said he, "you should well understand that I account my lord of Canterbury as faithful a man towards me as ever was prelate in this realm, and one to whom I am many ways beholden by the faith I owe unto God" (laying his hand on his

breast); and whoever loveth me will regard him on that account." This gave such an effectual check to Cranmer's enemies, that no more attempts were made against him during this reign.*

This convincing proof of the king's friendship encouraged Cranmer to procure the passing of an act of parliament to mollify the severity of the "act of six articles," or, as it is generally called, the "bloody statute." The provision of this bill was to prevent any one from being indicted on it without the presentment of twelve men upon oath,—or from being imprisoned without such an indictment, or the king's special warrant,—that the parties indicted should be admitted to all such challenges as were allowed in other cases of felony. None were liable to be prosecuted unless they were presented within a year after the offence; and, if for words in a sermon, the charge must be made within forty days. This bill met with considerable opposition in both houses, and the majority would probably have been against it, had it not been generally known that the conspiracies against Cranmer, which the king had detected, had softened his rigour in the prosecution of heresy, and that he was now inclined to favour the principles of the bill.

The primate acted with great prudence and caution in all his public proceedings. He never attempted to effect any change until he had convinced the king of its propriety, and had obtained

* Strype's Cranmer, ch. 28.

his permission to proceed. In 1544, great preparations were made for the king to invade France in person ; and prayers and processions were to be made for his success.

The archbishop, who had long wished to see the prayers of the church performed in English, embraced this opportunity of representing to his majesty that, if the prayers were in English, the people would join with greater fervency than they possibly could do when they were performed in an unknown tongue. The king commanded him to compose a number of prayers in English for the occasion, which he did, and then submitted them to the king for his inspection. His majesty highly approved of the performance, and commanded the primate to have them introduced into all the churches in his diocese, and send copies of them to all the bishops of his province, with strict orders for having them introduced into all the churches immediately. When the fleet was preparing, in which his majesty was to sail, an order was sent from the council to the archbishop, commanding him to order prayers and processions twice a week in all the churches of his province, for success and victory to his majesty's armies, and that the prayers should be in English. These injunctions were hailed with joy by the friends of the Reformation, who entertained a hope that they would be followed by others equally beneficial to the interests of the church. Nor was it long before their expectations were in part realized ; for the king was prevailed

upon to abolish some of the remaining superstitious ceremonies ; such as watching and ringing bells all night on the vigil of All-hallows,—that the images in churches and the cross should not be covered with veils, during the time of Lent, as formerly,— and that none should kneel or creep to the cross on Palm-Sunday, or at any other time. The execution of this royal injunction was committed to the archbishop.

Encouraged by what the king had recently granted, Cranmer endeavoured to accomplish another important object, as tending to promote the reformation and settlement of the church. This was, to form a new code of ecclesiastical laws for the government of the church of England. The canon law had long been esteemed almost of divine authority, and far more obligatory than any other human law. In that law the power and authority of the pope were carried to a most extravagant and impious height, nullifying all the laws of kings and emperors, that were opposed to the decrees and canons of the bishop of Rome. The archbishop represented to the king that, as the pope had now no power or authority over his subjects, the canon law, as it stood, could not be acknowledged in England ; and it was necessary the church should have a system of laws suited to her circumstances. The king so far fell in with the proposed measure as to appoint a commission of thirty-two persons—sixteen of the spirituality and sixteen of the temporality—to examine all

the canons, constitutions, and ordinances, out of which to draw up such a code of ecclesiastical laws as might, by the king and his council, be thought proper to be used in all spiritual courts. When the work was finished, it was presented to the king for his confirmation; but whether it did not meet his views, or whether his attention was too much taken up with other subjects, it never received the seal of his approbation, consequently was not established as a system of laws until the reign of his pious son Edward.

The king had for several years been growing corpulent, and was now become so heavy and infirm from an ulcer in his leg, that they had to employ an engine for getting him up and down stairs. This affliction had an unhappy effect on his naturally hot and irritable temper, so that the least contradiction made him intolerably peevish and irascible. Through this irritable temper, and the wicked devices of his popish counsellors, the queen was very near falling a sacrifice. The papists knew that the queen was favourable to the Reformation, and had heard sermons in her privy chamber from some of the reformed preachers. This was carefully carried to the king, and represented in the worst light, in order to prejudice his mind against her; but she was so assiduous about his person, and anxious to meet his inclinations, that his fondness for her caused him for a time to pay no attention to the reports. One day, in the course of free conversation on religious subjects, the queen ventured

to express an objection to some of his arguments, which she supported with more firmness and ability than was agreeable to one who had been so much flattered by learned men for his theological attainments. The king expressed his disapprobation of her theological remarks to Gardiner, bishop of Winchester, who instantly took the opportunity of inflaming his anger by representing the queen as a most dangerous heretic. Gardiner so far succeeded that the king ordered the lord chancellor to draw up articles of impeachment against the queen for opposing the six articles, and reading forbidden books, which he signed. It providentially happened that the chancellor dropped the paper which had just been signed by the king, and it was found by one of the queen's friends, who took it to her immediately. Alarmed at her danger, and suspecting the cause, she resolved to exert herself to the uttermost to regain his favour. At the next interview the king received her very graciously, and proposed to renew the subject of dispute in which they had before engaged. But she very modestly declined, saying that women ought to be instructed by their husbands; and it would ill become her especially to dispute with one whose superior wisdom and learning were known to all the world. The king replied, with an oath, that he thought she was become a doctor, and intended to instruct him. The queen mildly replied that she was afraid he had mistaken the freedom she had taken to argue with him on the

subject of religion,— that if ever she had pretended to dispute any thing he advanced it was for the sake of information, knowing the pleasure he took in such discourses, which diverted his pain, and from which she received the greatest instruction and delight. This seasonable piece of flattery not only appeased his anger but rekindled for her his former affection. He embraced her tenderly, and assured her of his favour and affection. The next day being very fine, the king took an airing in the garden, and sent for the queen to accompany him. Whilst they were engaged in the most agreeable conversation, the lord chancellor, Wriothesley, entered the garden with a party of guards to seize the queen and carry her to the Tower. The king went to meet the chancellor, and reproached him in the roughest manner for his malice against the queen: calling him fool, knave, and beast, and commanded him to be gone. The queen began to intercede in behalf of the chancellor, when the king said to her, smiling, “ Poor soul! you know not how little this man deserves your good offices.”* Thus, by a merciful providence, the queen escaped the snare that had been so artfully laid for her destruction. This plot so fully convinced the king of the malignant spirit of the popish party, that he became quite alienated from them; the bishop of Winchester in particular, whom he would never again restore to favour.

Though the papal party failed in their murder-

* Herbert, p. 263.

ous designs against both Cranmer and the queen, their thirst for blood remained unquenched; and the cruel act of the six articles favoured them with facilities for bringing a number to be burnt at the stake for denying the corporal presence of Christ in the sacrament. One of their victims was Mrs. Anne Askew, a lady of uncommon talents and learning, piety and virtue; of an ancient and opulent family in Lincolnshire. By her father's authority, but contrary to her own inclination, she was married to a Mr. Kyme, a zealous papist, who treated her with such cruelty that she was under the necessity of leaving his house; and she went to reside in London. Whilst living there, she was heard to express her disbelief in the corporal presence; for which she was apprehended, imprisoned, and examined by the council. At her examination she answered many of their questions with such propriety and soundness of argument as astonished her persecutors. During her examination, the lord mayor of London, Sir Martin Bowes, addressed her thus:—"Foolish woman, sayest thou that the priests cannot make the body of Christ?" "I have read," said she, "that God made man, but I never read that man made God." His lordship then asked her, "If a mouse eat the bread after it is consecrated, what will become of the mouse? What sayest thou, foolish woman?"—She asked, "What, my lord, do you say shall become of her?" He replied, "I say that that mouse is damned." "Alas!" said she, "alas, poor mouse!"

When examined before the bishop of London, she was asked, "whether she believed that departed souls were relieved by private masses." Her answer was, "O Lord, what idolatry is this, that we should rather believe in private masses than in the death of the dear Son of God!" At her examination before the commissioners for executing the act of the six articles, she was asked, "if she would deny the sacrament to be Christ's body and blood." She answered, "Yea; for Christ that was born of the blessed virgin is now in heaven, and will come from thence at the latter day.—That which ye call your god is but a piece of bread, and, after a time, will grow mouldy, and turn to nothing that is good; therefore it cannot be God." At the close of this examination, the commissioners pronounced her guilty, and condemned her to the flames. Whilst in the Tower she was tortured on the rack to extort something from her against the duchess of Suffolk, and the countess of Hertford, and some other ladies who were suspected of favouring the Reformation, against whom they were anxious to obtain evidence. As she would not criminate any of the ladies, nor even cry out of pain, the rack was applied with such severity that almost every joint was dislocated. On the day of her execution she was carried in a chair to Smithfield, and placed at the stake, being unable either to stand or walk after she had been on the rack. Before the fire was kindled, the lord chancellor offered her the king's pardon if she

would recant ; but she told him that she was not come there to deny her Lord and Master. She suffered with amazing cheerfulness ; and one who was present at her execution says, “She had an angel’s countenance and a smiling face.” There were burned at the same time, Nicholas Bellenian, a priest from Shropshire ; John Adams, a tailor ; and John Lassels, a gentleman of family and fortune, who had a place at court. They all suffered for denying the corporal presence of Christ in the sacrament of the altar, a doctrine of which Henry was a zealous defender to the end of his life.

The four persons above-named were the last that suffered at the stake in the reign of Henry VIII. The execution of the sentence passed upon Sir George Blage was prevented by a remarkable interposition of Providence. Sir George was a member of the privy chamber, against whom the lord chancellor and his party suborned false witnesses to accuse him for speaking against the mass. On their accusation the chancellor sent him to Newgate. The next day he was arraigned and condemned, and in a day or two was to have been burned in Smith-field. When his case became known it excited a whisper amongst the members of the privy chamber, which the king could never endure. He immediately inquired into the cause, when the earl of Bedford told him the whole story, and interceded for Sir George’s pardon. The king was highly offended at a member of his privy council being condemned without his knowledge, and com-

manded chancellor Wriothesley to draw up his pardon immediately, on which he was set at liberty. The first time Sir George came into his majesty's presence, after his release, the king said to him, using a familiar expression, "Ah, my pig!" "Yea," replied Sir George, "if your majesty had not been better to me than your bishops were, your pig would have been roasted before this time."

The last days of Henry VIII. appear to have been more occupied in accomplishing the ruin of the duke of Norfolk than in securing his own salvation. Though his domestics were aware that his end was near, yet so irritable was his temper that not one of them durst speak to him on the subject. At last Sir Anthony Denny, feeling for the eternal welfare of his royal master, honestly told him that he had but a short time to live, and advised him to reflect on his misconduct, and ask mercy of God through his Son Jesus Christ. The king thanked him for his advice, and expressed remorse at the remembrance of his sins, but trusted in the mercy of Christ, which he said was greater than all his sins. Sir Anthony Denny asked his majesty if he would wish a clergyman to be sent for; he replied, "If any, let it be Cranmer." The archbishop was immediately sent for to Croydon, but before he reached court the king was speechless. His grace desired the king, if he was sensible, to give some token of his dying in the faith of Christ, upon which he squeezed the archbishop's hand, and shortly after breathed his last, on Friday, January 28th, A. D. 1547.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE YEAR 1547 TO THE DEATH OF EDWARD VI.
IN THE YEAR 1553.

THE characters given of Henry VIII. by his biographers differ so materially from each other that they might easily pass for the lives of different persons. Whilst one describes him as a prince of undoubted bravery, wisdom, justice, and mercy; another portrays him as a cruel, unrelenting, tyrant, and destitute of every good quality. His real character, as drawn from matter of fact, will be found to lie between these two extremes. And as the Roman Catholic writers have frequently interwoven the worst parts of his character with their description of the protestant religion, we shall endeavour to give at least the outline of an unbiassed character of him.

In his person he was tall; and, in his youth, remarkably handsome, strong and active, excelling in all the fashionable and manly exercises. His mental powers were equal to his personal charms; for he had a genius capable of acquiring knowledge, which was greatly improved by a liberal education. He spoke several languages fluently, but his favourite study was school divinity, in which he imagined himself a great doctor. He

wrote his famous book against Martin Luther, *De Septem Sacramentis*, for which he received such boundless praise as no author below the dignity of a monarch must ever expect. This had an unhappy effect upon his naturally boisterous and impatient mind ; for he became so inflated with a vain conceit of his own superiority in every kind of knowledge, that, as bishop Burnet remarks, "he was one of the most uncounselled men in the world." Yet never monarch was more entirely led by a minister than, for a time, Henry was led by Cardinal Wolsey. The cardinal knew that nothing was relished so much by Henry as to be praised for his superior knowledge in divinity, and of this he was furnished with a daily feast. By this artifice he kept the king so much engaged in religious controversy, that he had the sole administration of the state, by merely asking advice, and then submitting to his majesty what he wished to carry ; and his measures were seldom opposed, until the rupture on the affair of the divorce. As he advanced in life, and began to take a more active part in business, passions of a darker character and of a more dangerous tendency began to develop themselves. He inherited from his father an extreme jealousy of all who were related to the royal family, and could be supposed to entertain the most distant thoughts of the throne. Through this passion several persons of high rank fell a sacrifice. Though prodigality and avarice are opposite passions, they are sometimes found to

exist in the same person ; and Henry was both profuse and covetous in the extreme. Of all his bad passions, his anger was the most terrible ; for if he once conceived a prejudice against, or a dislike to, a person, his ruin was resolved ; and no submissions, no supplications, no intercessions, nor the clearest evidences of his innocence, could save him from destruction. The character he is said to have given of himself was but too correct, “That he never spared a man in his anger, nor a woman in his lust.”

It is to his imperious and haughty temper, which could not bear the least contradiction, especially in the case of his divorce, and his ambition in being styled “supreme head of the church of England,” that we owe his revolt from the church of Rome. It is evident that it was not his love to a purer religion ; for he retained some of the most corrupt dogmas of popery to his last hour. Our opinion is, that he was a great bad man, some of whose worst properties were overruled by the providence of God as the means of dissolving the degrading and oppressive connexion between this kingdom and the court of Rome.

After performing the funeral rites of the late king, at Windsor, preparations were made by the archbishop for the coronation of the young king, which took place with the usual ceremonies at Westminster on the twentieth of February, 1547. At his coronation three swords were delivered to him, as king of England, France, and Ireland.

Having received the three, he told the archbishop there was yet another sword to be delivered to him. On being asked which was the other sword, he replied, the *Sacred Bible*, which is the sword of the Spirit, and without which we can do nothing. Such were the scriptural views and pious feelings of this amiable young prince, at the tender age of nine years and four months.

The late king had nominated in his will sixteen persons as executors and regents of the kingdom, with a privy council of two peers and ten commoners to assist them. He intended that the regents should be all equal in power,—that in case any of them should die the survivors should not abridge their honours by electing others, but should govern the nation until his son had attained his eighteenth year. Whilst Henry was living, he only had to command, and it was done; but, being now dead, his imperiousness and power were dead with him, and his ministers departed from both the letter and spirit of his will without fear of offending him. No sooner was the will read, appointing sixteen of equal power in the administration, but it was unanimously agreed that one should be appointed president over the others, with the title and dignity of protector, but who should act in concert with a majority of the rest. This honour the executors conferred on lord Seymour, earl of Hertford, the king's uncle, who was to be protector of the king's realms, and governor of his person. It is a singular coincidence

that Henry, who by his own arbitrary power defeated the wills of so many founders of religious houses, should have his own will defeated almost as soon as it was known.

This deviation from the king's will, and promotion of the earl of Hertford, made a deep impression on the public mind; especially as it was well known that some of the regents were for the *new*, and others for the *old* religion, as these terms were then used in reference to popery and the doctrines of the Reformation. This doubtless would have proved fatal to the friends of the Reformation, as the majority of the bishops and inferior clergy were in favour of popery, had not the young king evinced a zeal and prudence, far beyond his years, in the support and spread of the doctrines of the Reformation. The reformed party were headed by the king, the protector, and the archbishop; and the popish party were headed by the princess Mary, the earl of Southampton, the lord chancellor; the bishops Tunstal, Bonner, and Gardiner, with others of inferior name.

The first act of the new government was the proclamation of a general pardon, excepting only the duke of Norfolk, cardinal Pole, lord Courtney, and three others. The persecution upon the act of the six articles was suspended; the prison doors were thrown open, and numbers who had been compelled to leave the kingdom on account of their religion returned home, and preached more zealously than ever against the corruptions of the church of Rome.

Hooper, Rogers, and others were preferred to considerable benefices ; but Latimer chose rather to remain with the archbishop at Lambeth, and employ himself in preaching, than return to his bishopric.

One of the first events of importance after the coronation was the fall of the lord chancellor, the earl of Southampton. Having put himself at the head of the popish party, he intended watching the proceedings of the protector and his friends, for the purpose of opposing whatever he thought might militate against the interests of the old religion. To leave himself more at liberty to pursue his design, he gave a commission, on his own authority, to the master of the rolls and three masters in chancery, to execute his office in the court of chancery in as decisive a manner as if he himself were present. On this act of the chancellor's being known, a charge was preferred against him for abuse of privilege. The judges gave it as their opinion that by his giving such a commission, without any warrant from the council, he had forfeited his office, and was liable to imprisonment and fine at the king's pleasure. The judges having delivered their opinion on his case, he was commanded to deliver up the seals, and was confined in his own house until he had given a bond for four thousand pounds, to be paid on demand. The prompt manner in which the court proceeded against the lord chancellor had a salutary effect at that crisis. The popish party were greatly

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that Henry, who by his own arbitrary power defeated the wills of so many founders of religious houses, should have his own will defeated almost as soon as it was known.

This deviation from the king's will, and promotion of the earl of Hertford, made a deep impression on the public mind; especially as it was well known that some of the regents were for the *new*, and others for the *old* religion, as these terms were then used in reference to popery and the doctrines of the Reformation. This doubtless would have proved fatal to the friends of the Reformation, as the majority of the bishops and inferior clergy were in favour of popery, had not the young king evinced a zeal and prudence, far beyond his years, in the support and spread of the doctrines of the Reformation. The reformed party were headed by the king, the protector, and the archbishop; and the popish party were headed by the princess Mary, the earl of Southampton, the lord chancellor; the bishops Tunstal, Bonner, and Gardiner, with others of inferior name.

The first act of the new government was the proclamation of a general pardon, excepting only the duke of Norfolk, cardinal Pole, lord Courtney, and three others. The persecution upon the act of the six articles was suspended; the prison doors were thrown open, and numbers who had been compelled to leave the kingdom on account of their religion returned home, and preached more zealously than ever against the corruptions of the church of Rome.

Hooper, Rogers, and others were preferred to considerable benefices ; but Latimer chose rather to remain with the archbishop at Lambeth, and employ himself in preaching, than return to his bishopric.

One of the first events of importance after the coronation was the fall of the lord chancellor, the earl of Southampton. Having put himself at the head of the popish party, he intended watching the proceedings of the protector and his friends, for the purpose of opposing whatever he thought might militate against the interests of the old religion. To leave himself more at liberty to pursue his design, he gave a commission, on his own authority, to the master of the rolls and three masters in chancery, to execute his office in the court of chancery in as decisive a manner as if he himself were present. On this act of the chancellor's being known, a charge was preferred against him for abuse of privilege. The judges gave it as their opinion that by his giving such a commission, without any warrant from the council, he had forfeited his office, and was liable to imprisonment and fine at the king's pleasure. The judges having delivered their opinion on his case, he was commanded to deliver up the seals, and was confined in his own house until he had given a bond for four thousand pounds, to be paid on demand. The prompt manner in which the court proceeded against the lord chancellor had a salutary effect at that crisis. The popish party were greatly

mortified at seeing the countenance given to the Reformers whilst preaching against masses and obits, although the late king had left a large sum of money to have them continued for the repose of his soul, and its deliverance out of purgatory. But these masses were soon discontinued, and the money appropriated to more profitable purposes. The popish clergy contended that, until the king came of age, religion ought to remain in the state in which the late king had left it; but it was declared that the king's authority was the same whilst a minor as when of age, and that the late king had declared his intention of turning the mass into a communion, which had he lived a little longer would have taken place; they therefore, even on that ground, thought it their duty to proceed.

The archbishop, finding himself relieved from the restraints under which he was held by Henry, began now to prosecute his great design of a complete reformation. In this important work he was sometimes partially interrupted by the untempered zeal of some of his warmest friends. In their eagerness to remove from the churches what they thought derogatory to the honour and service of God, they acted not only without authority, but sometimes against it, and thereby gave their enemies an advantage over them. The primate had laid it down as his rule, to proceed rather by slow than rapid steps, that he might show the reasonableness and propriety of the part he acted, and as being more calculated to prevent any general

relapse, or to disarm any dangerous opposition that might be raised against the Reformation.

The arrangements of the regency being settled, commissioners were appointed to visit the churches ; at the same time the clergy were commanded not to preach any where but in their own parish churches, without a license, until after the visitation. The kingdom was divided into six circuits ; and to each circuit were appointed two gentlemen, a civilian, a register, and a divine, with a jurisdiction equal to what had formerly been granted to lord Cromwell. The commissioners commenced their visitation in August 1547, attended by six of the most popular divines to preach and explain the doctrines of the Reformation, as contained in a book of homilies, consisting of twelve discourses, upon the principal points of the Christian faith. They were instructed to leave one copy of the homilies with every parish priest, to supply the defect of preaching, a service which but few of the clergy at that time were capable of performing. They were directed from the king to deliver certain injunctions to the bishops, who were to see them put in execution. They were also required themselves to preach four times in a year, unless they could assign a sufficient reason. The injunctions were in substance as follows :— “That the clergy, and no others, should take down such images as they knew were abused to superstition,—that the people should be examined at their confessions in Lent, whether they

could recite the elements of religion in the English tongue,—that the epistle and gospel at high mass, and the first and second lesson on every Sunday and holiday, should be read in English, that there should be no more processions about churches,—that in future the Sabbath day should be spent according to God's will, in hearing and reading his word, in public and private prayers, receiving the communion, visiting the sick, and reconciling themselves to their neighbours:—that the people should be taught the absurdity of sprinkling their beds with holy water, the ringing of bells, or using blessed candles, for driving away devils," &c. The bishops were further commanded to see that "their chaplains were able to preach the word of God, and be diligently employed in it,—that they should give orders to none but such as were learned in the Scriptures, and who would discharge their duty in preaching the doctrines set forth in the book of homilies; and, if any of the clergy neglected these duties, he should be punished and deprived of his licence."

Many of the lower orders of the clergy received the book of homilies with as much pleasure and indifference as they would have received a new image, on being informed that to prostrate themselves before it would insure them the revenues of their cure. Some of the bishops were less pliant, especially Bonner and Gardiner, who protested against both the homilies and injunctions, as contrary to the book set out by the late king, and also

to the word of God, for which they were both sent to the Fleet till they were released by a general act of grace.

At the meeting of the first parliament, an act was passed repealing the two statutes against the Lollards. Another act was passed to repeal the statute of the six articles, and also the act that made the king's proclamation of equal authority with an act of parliament. The same parliament passed an act authorizing the sacrament to be administered in both kinds, agreeably to the institution of Christ, and the practice of the church for the first five hundred years, and that all private masses should be left to the option of the individual, either to practise them or not. An order was published to prohibit the carrying of candles on candlemas-day,—of ashes on Ash-Wednesday,—of palm on Palm-Sunday, with the rites used on Good-Friday and Easter-day.

It is a remarkable fact that only five bishops protested against the passing of these bills ; and what makes so feeble an opposition the more extraordinary is, that another bill was passed at the same time enacting, "that all who denied the king's supremacy, or asserted that of the pope, should, for the first offence, forfeit their goods and chattels, and suffer imprisonment during the king's pleasure, for the second offence suffer the pains of premunire, and for the third offence be attainted of high treason."

In this parliament another bill passed into a law,

to set aside the choice of bishops by *congé d'érire*, which amounted to no more than the mere shadow of an election; and that all bishops should hereafter be appointed by the king's letters patent only, and continue the exercise of their office during their natural life, unless forfeited by misconduct.

It is doubtful whether any part of the Christian worship has been less understood, or more grossly abused, than the sacrament of the Lord's supper. Nothing could be more plain and simple than the first institution as stated in the gospel, except that figurative expression, "This is my body," upon which such a number of gross corruptions and impositions have been founded. Our Lord Jesus Christ instituted the holy sacrament under two symbols, bread and wine. In that way it was celebrated in the Christian church for more than a thousand years, the people communicating in both kinds. But the church of Rome has changed the institution of Jesus Christ, by denying the cup to the laity. The words which our Lord spoke figuratively, they apply literally, and enjoin as an article of faith that, after the priest has pronounced the consecration, the very body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was nailed to the cross, is contained entire in the smallest part of the bread, and in the least drop of the wine. The words of consecration are whispered in an unknown language in order to give them the appearance of a mystical charm. After the consecration the priest

does not approach it but with bowings, and crossings, and kissings of the altar; and, to close the solemn farce, the priest elevates the pix, or holy box in which the consecrated wafers are put, on the front of which is inscribed, *Hic Deum adora*, "worship God here," when the people fall down and worship it, as if it were the Lord Jesus Christ that had appeared to them in the clouds. This was established as the doctrine of the church of Rome by an authority no less than the council of Trent, A.D. 1551, Sess. 13. chap. v. can. 6, "Therefore none can doubt but that the faithful of Christ, according to the custom always received in the Catholic church, should *worship the most holy sacrament with the highest worship*, even that *due to the true God!* Nor is it therefore *the less to be worshipped* because appointed to be eaten."

The sacrament being a commemoration of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, and by a figure of speech called a sacrifice, the people were taught that the consecration of the elements by the priest was of itself expiatory, both for the living and the dead; and it is by the church of Rome called, "the sacrifice of the mass." Hence arose that infinite number of masses in the church of Rome; masses for saints, for souls, for rain, for health, for any particular blessing, and for all the accidents and incidents of human life, which were distinguished only by the variation of a collect. But this whole trade of massing was at once removed from the church in England by an act of

parliament, against which only five bishops protested.

These changes in the religious worship of the country produced a powerful effect on the public mind. Many, both of the bishops and inferior orders in the church, who had outwardly conformed to the orders of the court, abhorred all idea of a reformation, and cherished a deep-rooted malignity against Cranmer as its promoter. Many of the ministers contended in their sermons for the old superstitious rites, though they were abolished by the court. As the festivals connected with Easter approached, some of them went so far in their sermons as to assert that, although the rites had been abolished by the king's authority, they ought still to be observed. These sentiments were very pleasing to the common people in general, who in every age and country are fond of the pomp of processions, shows, and magnificent habits,—and, having been so long entertained with such amusements, thought it a dull concern to come to church merely to hear sermons, and say their prayers, without having any thing to amuse or please their senses. By men of piety and understanding, the subject was viewed in a very different light; they considered all this glare and tinsel as of pagan origin, and pernicious to the simplicity of the Christian worship. The archbishop having stated the case to the council, and procured an order for suppressing the use of candles, ashes, and palms on the usual days, sent the order to Bonner, as dean of

the college of bishops in the province of Canterbury, for him to transmit to the other bishops. This was an ungrateful task to Bonner, against which he loudly murmured; but the archbishop reminded him that it was not his order, but that of the privy council, and, not wishing again to fall under its censure, he at last reluctantly obeyed.

This new order of things did not sit easy on the minds of the country people, whose prejudices were strong in favour of their wakes, processions, and pompous rites. The old monks and friars, taking advantage of the people's prejudices, so inflamed their passions against the government, for suppressing the processions and wakes, that they rose up in arms against them in several parts of the kingdom. The most formidable insurrections were in Devonshire and Norfolk. In Devonshire, the insurgents amounted to at least ten thousand men, headed by one Humphrey Arundel, an experienced soldier. They drew up the following proposals and sent them to the king, demanding,—“ 1. That the law of the six articles should be restored. 2. That mass should be said in Latin. 3. That the host should be elevated and adored. 4. That the sacrament should be given but in one kind. 5. That images should be set up again in the churches. 6. That prayers and masses should be said for the souls in purgatory. 7. That the Bible should be called in and prohibited. 8. That the new service book should be laid aside, and the old religion restored.” The answer

returned by the court was very dissatisfactory to the insurgents. The most pacific part of it was an offer of pardon to all who would lay down their arms, and return to their habitations. With these terms the greatest part of them would have complied, had not the monks and priests encouraged them to proceed, by carrying before them crosses, banners, holy water, candlesticks, and other implements of superstition. They besieged the city of Exeter, and reduced it to the last extremity, but it was happily relieved by the arrival of lords Russel and Gray, who defeated the poor deluded insurgents with great slaughter. Arundel their leader, and several others, were sent to London, where they were condemned and executed. Many of the lower orders of them were put to death by martial law. The vicar of St. Thomas, one of the principal incendiaries, was hanged upon the top of his own steeple, arrayed in his popish habits, with his beads at his girdle. The insurrection in Norfolk assumed a still more alarming appearance, the insurgents amounting to not fewer than twenty thousand men. They demanded the suppression of the gentry, and that new counsellors should be placed about the king. They were headed by one Ket a tanner, who held his court under an old oak near Norwich, which was called the Oak of Reformation. They besieged and took Norwich, and put the mayor and some of the principal citizens into prison. The marquis of Northampton was first sent against them, but was repulsed

with considerable loss. The earl of Warwick was next sent with six thousand men, and coming to a general engagement put them completely to the rout. Two thousand of them fell in the fight; Ket was hanged at Norwich castle, and nine of his followers on the boughs of the Oak of Reformation. Thus terminated the last insurrection in this reign in favour of popery.

The zeal manifested by the court for purging out the leaven of popery was severely felt by some dignitaries of the church. Day, bishop of Chichester, Heath of Worcester, and Vesey of Exeter, were deprived of their bishoprics. The bishops of Landaff, ~~Salisbury~~, and Coventry met with a milder fate, for, by sacrificing a considerable part of their ecclesiastical revenues, they were permitted to hold their sees. But what is more to be lamented than the loss of revenue to a few individuals is, the destruction of many valuable books. Whilst ransacking the libraries of Westminster and Oxford, in search of Roman catholic missals, legends, and other superstitious works, many valuable volumes of geometry and astronomy, clasped in silver, were destroyed for the sake of their rich bindings.

It is painful to find that, after all the Reformers had suffered in the last reign from the law of the six articles, they should now act with such rigour towards those who differed from the standard of their faith. That which brought the most marked and merited reproach upon the Reformers was, their merciless treatment of Joan

Bocher, or, as she was generally called, Joan of Kent. This poor woman had embraced the speculative opinion, that Christ was not *really* incarnate of the virgin, whose flesh, being sinful, he could not partake of it, but that the Word, by the consent of the inward man in the virgin, took flesh of her. Her faith in this opinion was so strong that all reasoning and argument were lost in attempting to convince her of the contrary. She could not reconcile the spotless purity of Christ's human nature with his receiving flesh from a sinful creature. For maintaining this opinion, instead of being sent to an asylum, she was pronounced an obstinate heretic, and condemned to be burnt. When the case of this poor woman was brought before the council, the young king could not prevail upon himself to sign the warrant for her execution. He thought it equally cruel in the Reformers as in papists to take away the lives of Christians, on account of a difference in their belief, especially when it was an effect either of weakness or of a disordered mind. Cranmer, being employed by the council to persuade the king, argued from the practice of the Jewish church in stoning blasphemers, which rather silenced than satisfied him; for when he yielded to the archbishop's importunity, he told him with tears, that if he did wrong, since it was in submission to his authority, he must answer for it to God. This excellent reply from so young a prince is at least presumptive proof that he possessed a larger portion of

Christian sympathy than the archbishop himself; for although Cranmer was almost horrified with the king's appeal, he permitted the poor woman to be brought to the stake and consumed to ashes. This was a severe stain on the character of the English Reformers; and when Cranmer and Ridley were brought to the stake in the following reign, it was considered by many as a just retaliating providence for having burned others who differed from them in some articles of faith.

About this time a complaint was laid before the council, that a number of Germans were come into England of the Anabaptist persuasion, who were disseminating their errors, and proselyting great numbers to their opinions. These baptists did not all hold the same sentiments; some of them merely held that baptism ought to be administered only to such as were capable of being instructed and desired it; the others denied almost all the doctrines and principles of Christianity, and, by denying infant baptism, were included in the general name of anabaptists, and thereby brought the whole into disgrace. The court ordered a commission to the primate and six other bishops, with the secretaries of state, to "search after all anabaptists, heretics, or contemners of the Common Prayer." Their commission gave them a discretionary power to absolve all whom they could reclaim and bring to penance. Another sect appeared at the same time, who, from affecting a superior acquaintance with the Scriptures, were called *gospellers*, while their

immoral lives did much discredit to their profession.

A considerable number of the Reformers held the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation, founded upon a mistaken idea of some passages in the New Testament. From these doctrines, some strange inferences were drawn by the people, very different from what was intended by their teachers, but perfectly natural. They inferred, that if the moral state of every man in this world, and his final condition in the other, were fixed by an irrevocable decree of God, that man had nothing to do but leave himself to act that part which had been appointed him. This conclusion encouraged some in the greatest acts of impiety, and plunged others in despair. Monstrous as the natural effect of this doctrine was, it did not convince our Reformers, as it had done the Lutherans, that they had misunderstood those scriptures on which it was founded; but while with Calvin they maintained the doctrine of the decrees, they, nevertheless, at the same time, cautioned the people not to enter too much into these subtleties, as they were among the hidden mysteries of God.

An act was passed in parliament for appointing thirty-two commissioners to compile a body of ecclesiastical laws, to be completed in three years; and, not being contrary to the statute law, they were to be published by the king's warrant, under the great seal, and to have the force of laws in the ecclesiastical courts. This design was twice at-

tempted during the last reign, but the unsettled state of Henry's affairs, especially in the latter part of his reign, prevented its accomplishment. Another act was passed in the same parliament relating to the ordination of ministers, in which no notice was taken of the lower orders in the church of Rome, but only of bishops, priests, and deacons. The forms for this service were to be drawn up by six bishops and six divines, to be named by the king, and authorized by a warrant under the great seal. In their warrant it was distinctly stated, that no deacon should be ordained under twenty-one, no priest under twenty-four, nor a bishop before he was thirty years of age. In this ordination form most of the modern rites of the church of Rome were left out. The gloves, the sandals, the mitre, the ring and crosier, which had been used in the consecration of bishops, were dispensed with, and the ceremony consisted simply of the imposition of hands and prayer. The anointing, the giving consecrated vestments, the delivering into the hands vessels for consecrating the eucharist, with a power to offer sacrifice for the living and the dead, which had been the custom in the ordination of a priest, were also omitted, and the bishop was to lay one hand on the priest's head, and with his other to give him a Bible, and a chalice with bread in it. Notwithstanding the advanced state of the Reformation, a strong feeling prevailed in many places in favour of the old rites and ceremonies, and hopes were entertained

that the “new service” would yet give place to the mass-book. To silence all such expectations, the council sent a letter to all the bishops of England, requiring all clergymen to deliver to such persons as the king should nominate for that purpose, all the missals, breviaries, and all other offices of divine service, whether for public or private use, and in future to use only the book of Common Prayer, and to provide both bread and wine in every church for celebrating the sacrament. The bishops were further enjoined to see that every image of a saint, belonging to any church or chapel in their dioceses, should be defaced; and that the prayers to the saints should be erased out of all the primers.

In the work of reforming the church, one thing naturally led to another. The Reformers were unanimous in their opinion that the retaining of altars in the churches would serve to nourish the idea of a propitiatory mass, and was calculated to cause much contention at a future time. The idea was first suggested by Hooper in a sermon which he preached at court. He there proved, by passages from ancient writers, that the communion-tables were originally made of wood, and in the form of tables; for those who fled into the churches for sanctuary used to hide themselves under them. But the church of Rome having corrupted the eucharist into the expiatory sacrifice of the mass, had changed both their form and place in the church. The council sent letters to the bishops, ordering

the altars to be removed out of all churches, and directing the curates and churchwardens to provide a table decently covered, and to place it in a convenient part of the choir and chancel. To remove the scruples of weak minds, the following reasons for the alteration were published :—“ That as an altar was for sacrifice, so a table, which was for eating, was more proper for the Lord’s supper ; —that in the book of Common Prayer, the terms altar and table are used promiscuously, without prescribing any thing about the form of them, so that this change would not occasion any change in the liturgy ; —and that altars were erected for sacrifices under the law, which being abrogated by the MESSIAH, who had instituted the eucharist, not at an altar but at a table, it was fit that the altars should be abolished also.”

Whatever effect the above reasons had on the minds of the lower orders, they did not remove the scruples from some of the bishops, who positively refused to comply with the council’s order. Day, bishop of Chichester, founded his objection upon a literal application of the apostle’s words to the Hebrews, “ We have an altar.” When brought before the council he persisted in his objection, when both he and Heath, bishop of Worcester, were deprived of their bishoprics.

About this time an unhappy debate arose out of the following circumstance. The see of Gloucester became vacant, and Hooper was recommended to it by the Earl of Warwick. Hooper was a man

of talent and learning, a popular preacher, and a zealous protestant. But, having resided much in Switzerland, he had imbibed some singular notions which it was found not easy to remove. He accepted the king's nomination to the bishopric, but refused to be consecrated in the episcopal habits, and Cranmer would not consecrate him without them. Hooper assigned as a reason for objecting to them that the sacerdotal vestments were of human invention,—and that they were introduced for the celebration of mass, and were amongst those things condemned by St. Paul as “beggarly elements.” He objected also to the form of the oath, which read thus:—“By God, by the saints, and by the Holy Ghost,” which he thought impious, because God only ought to be appealed to in an oath, as he alone can read the hearts of men. The objectionable part of the oath was soon removed by the young king, who struck out the words with his own pen; but the dispensing with the habits presented more formidable difficulties. To remove his scruples, both Bucer and Peter Martyr were consulted, who treated his objections to the habits as groundless, and urged several reasons why he ought to conform. But their arguments as well as those used by the archbishop, who had him at his own house, were all lost upon him, for he began to add so much insolence to his obstinacy, that the council ordered him to be sent to the Fleet prison. After deliberating on the subject nine months in prison, the affair was thus compromised:—He en-

gaged to wear his episcopal habits when consecrated, and when he preached before the king, in his cathedral, or in any public place ; but on other occasions they were to be dispensed with.

This contention greatly lowered the standard of Hooper's popularity, and diminished the number of his admirers. His conduct amazed some of his former friends, who argued thus : If he considered it sinful to wear the episcopal habit, they knew not how he could reconcile his conscience to wear it on particular occasions ; and if he did not believe it sinful, why give the king and council so much trouble about what he considered as indifferent ; especially as these contentions gave great advantage to the enemies of the Reformation. After all that can be said on the subject of Hooper's unnecessary scruples, we are inclined to think that it would have been no real loss to Christianity had all those habits been laid aside which were evidently of popish origin. But the minds of the bishops were not at that time prepared for carrying the Reformation to that extent. The conduct of some of the professed friends of the Reformation, who were neither moral in their lives nor sound in their principles, might render the cautionary measures of the bishops quite necessary.

A circumstance took place in the year 1557, which for its singularity ought to be recorded, and for the benefit of religion to be imitated. Vesey, bishop of Exeter, whose age and infirmities had rendered him incapable of performing the functions

of his office, applied to the council for leave to resign his bishopric. The court complied with his request, and Coverdale was appointed his coadjutor. We are not aware that any English bishop has since that time made a similar resignation. It is common for men of all other professions to retire from public employment when either age or infirmity disqualifies for the duties of their office; but the history of the British churches confirms the fact, that many English bishops have for years held their office after they were incapable of attending to the affairs of the church. The evils arising out of such a circumstance might be prevented, were the superannuated bishop to resign the functions of his office to a coadjutor.

In the latter part of this year, 1551, we find the Reformers employed in a further correction of the book of Common Prayer. Several objectionable passages were erased, and others more appropriate were supplied. The service of the day was made to commence with a short confession of sins, and the promise of pardon to the penitent. The communion service opened with a rehearsal of the ten commandments, and the congregation being on their knees, a pause was to be made between each for the people's devotion. A rubric was added concerning the posture of kneeling, which declares that there was no adoration thereby intended to the bread and wine, which would be gross idolatry; nor did they think that the very flesh and blood of Christ were there present. This clause was erased

by queen Elizabeth, to meet the views of the papists and Lutherans; but was inserted again at the restoration of Charles II. at the request of the puritans, when it was reduced nearly to the form in which it now appears.

At the meeting of the next parliament, an act was passed to confirm the alterations made in the Common Prayer, and ordination service. The same act required the new service-book to be received in all the churches before the feast of All-hallows; and that every person should attend at common prayers every Sunday and holy-day, on pain of the censures of the church. By another clause in this same act it was declared, "that the king, the lords temporal, and the commons, did, in God's name, require all archbishops and bishops, and other ordinaries, to endeavour the due execution of it, as they would answer before God for such evils and plagues with which he might punish them for neglecting that good and wholesome law." By another act which passed this session, the marriages of the clergy, if performed according to the service-book, were declared good and valid, and their children inheritable according to law.

After the close of this session of parliament, the commissioners, who were appointed to prepare a code of ecclesiastical laws for the government of the church, were most assiduous in accomplishing their undertaking, as nothing more appeared necessary to complete the Reformation. Through the unparalleled exertions of Cranmer, that important

work was completed, but the king died before it received the royal sanction, in consequence of which it fell to the ground; nor has it ever been resumed with half that care and attention which a subject of such importance to the welfare of the public requires.

During the reign of Edward, the wealth of the nation greatly increased; and yet, notwithstanding the king's frugality, the exchequer was very low. By the advice of the Duke of Northumberland, he appointed a royal visitation to examine what plate, jewels, and other furniture remained in the churches. The *professed* object of this examination was, to compare the present stock with the inventories of a former visitation, to see what had been embezzled, and enforce restitution: but the *real* object was, to see how much could be appropriated to the king's use. The commissioners had orders to leave in every church one or two chalices of silver, with linen for the communion-tables and surplices; to sell the linen copes, altar-cloths, &c., and distribute the money among the poor; but all the jewels, vessels of gold, and rich altar-cloths were to be delivered to the treasurer of his majesty's household.

Some historians have animadverted with severity on the young king for granting this commission for the purpose of plundering the churches. It must be admitted that a great alienation of church property took place both in this and the preceding reign. Many valuable estates were taken from the

church, and bestowed upon the fawning courtiers, who were eagerly grasping at all the lands on which they could lay their hands. Such an alienation of church property can never be justified, whilst there were so many small livings in the country unendowed: but, as a mitigating circumstance in favour of the young king, it should be remembered, that he was then rapidly sinking under the wasting hand of a pulmonary consumption, and his weakness rendered him incapable of attending to the affairs of state, consequently he put his hand to any article that was presented to him by the council.

The king was now rapidly sinking under his complaint, and strong suspicions were entertained that his affliction was promoted by having poison administered to him in small portions. This conjecture gained credit from connecting circumstances. After the Duke of Northumberland had prevailed upon the king to sign his letters patent, by which the two princesses, Mary and Elizabeth, were disinherited, and the crown settled on the heirs of the duchess of Suffolk, the king's physicians were dismissed, and he was put under the care of an ignorant woman, who engaged to restore him to health in a short time. But instead of a restoration to health, the worst symptoms daily increased, and showed that his end was at no great distance. He bore his affliction with all the pious resignation to the divine will of one who had a well-grounded hope of future happiness. In his last moments, he prayed fervently for himself and his subjects, that

the Lord would defend England from popery, and preserve the true religion; and, turning to Sir Henry Sidney, he said, "O, I am faint! Lord, have mercy on me, and receive my spirit," and immediately expired, July 6th, 1553, in the sixteenth year of his age, and the seventh of his reign.

We have now traced the Reformation through its most important stages down to the death of Edward VI. That the Reformation was not rendered more perfect by its first promoters is greatly to be regretted; but that they accomplished so much, under existing circumstances, must be ascribed to a special interposition of divine providence. To an unbiassed mind, it must appear an adventurous undertaking, for a few bishops and privy councillors to change the religion of the nation whilst the king was a minor, and without having either the consent of the people through parliament, or of the clergy by convocation; and that too under the eye of the presumptive heir to the crown, who was violently opposed both to their principles and proceedings. It is to be lamented that the Reformers have in some instances acted too much under the influence of the spirit of the age in which they lived, by using the civil power to compel men to conformity in religion. But notwithstanding these faults, they were both great and good men, and so valiant for the truth as not to shrink from sealing it with their blood. It was evidently their intention, had the life of the

king been spared, to have carried the Reformation much further, by removing from the church all the superstitious pomp introduced by the church of Rome. The learned Bullinger relates, "that Cranmer had composed a book of prayer an hundred times better than that which was then in being; but the same could not take place, for that he was matched with such a wicked clergy and convocation and other enemies." Bucer informs us that "the king also wished there might be a stricter discipline exercised in the church to exclude all scandalous livers from the sacrament. He disapproved of godfathers answering in the child's name instead of their own. He also noticed several other things in a treatise he had begun to write on reforming the church, but he died before it was finished, and with him died all further advances of the Reformation, as will be seen in the subsequent pages.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN MARY, IN 1553, TO
HER DEATH IN 1558.

To dilate on the civil and political affairs of the country is so foreign from the plan of this work, that all such subjects would be passed over in silence, were it not that the changes in the religion of the country have been so interwoven with the state, that the one cannot be faithfully related without reference to the other. On the death of Edward, the perfidious character of Northumberland was fully developed. When he found that the king was on the point of death, to enable him to get the two princesses into his power, he induced the council to write in the king's name to invite them to court, saying that the king greatly desired their assistance and company. But, before either of them arrived, the king expired. The circumstance of the king's death was carefully concealed, in order that the princesses might fall into the snare. Mary had arrived within half a day's journey, when a messenger from the earl of Arundel communicated the intelligence both of her brother's death and the conspiracy in reference to the crown. Mary immediately changed her course, and went to Framlingham in Suffolk, intending to sail into Flanders, in case she could not defend her

right to the crown. From this place she dispatched a messenger to the council, informing them that the death of her brother was no longer a secret. She promised them pardon for all past offences, and required them immediately to give orders for proclaiming her in London. She also sent letters to the principal nobility and gentry in England, commanding them to assist her in defence of her person and crown.

Northumberland, finding that he could no longer act under a mask, brought lady Jane Gray from Sion house to the Tower, where it was usual for the sovereigns of England to spend a few days after their accession to the throne. Though the general tone of feeling through the nation was in favour of the Reformation, and lady Jane Gray was a zealous protestant, while Mary was a most bigoted papist, yet all who considered the subject saw that, whatever preference might be given to the principles of lady Jane, the just claims of Mary were so clear that to raise another to the throne would involve the nation in all the horrors of a civil war. The ambitious Northumberland had his eyes opened at last to see the critical situation in which he had placed himself, and, having mustered all the forces he could, he marched towards Norwich to disperse the gathering hosts round the standard of Mary. But at every stage he met with greater discouragement; for wherever Mary was proclaimed the acclamations were loud and reiterated, but no one wished him God's speed.

Policy was not wanting on the part of Mary ; for she acquired a great number of troops through the promise she made to the people of Suffolk that she would make no alteration in religion. But this was a mere court promise, made to answer a present purpose, without any intention of keeping it. Mary set out towards London at the head of the army she had raised, and was met on the way by lady Elizabeth with a thousand horsemen, which she had raised to support their joint title to the crown against the usurper. Before the arrival of the queen, both the council and citizens of London had declared for her ; and, on the third of August she made her public entry into the city without the loss of a drop of blood. On her arrival at the Tower, she released bishops Tunstal, Gardiner, and Bonner, whom she called her prisoners, they having been confined for adhering to the catholic cause.

The following day she declared in council, before the mayor and aldermen of London, "that though her mind was fixed in matters of religion, yet she would not compel others but by the preaching of the word." Next day the congregation at St. Paul's church was thrown into the greatest confusion. Dr. Bourne, one of the canons of the church, was preaching, and in his sermon he cast some severe reflections upon the late king Edward and the Reformation, which threw the whole audience into an uproar. Numbers cried out, " Pull down the preacher ;" others threw stones ; and one

threw a dagger, which stuck in the pulpit. The commotion increasing, the doctor would have paid dear for his temerity, had not Messrs. Rogers and Bradford, two popular preachers for the Reformation, rescued him at the risk of their own lives. But these good men met with very different treatment a short time after, being first imprisoned, and then burnt for heresy. To prevent further tumults, the queen published an inhibition, forbidding all preaching without special license; and by another proclamation she commanded all masters to oblige their apprentices and servants to attend their own parish church on Sundays and holydays, and to keep them at home at other times.

By the above proclamation all the protestant pulpits were closed at once, which convinced the people that little was to be expected from the queen's clemency. Some of the protestants in Suffolk, presuming upon the promise she gave them, sent a deputation to court to represent their grievances; when one of them, for presuming to remind the queen of her promise, was put in the pillory three days in succession, and had his ears cut off for defamation. That the people might at once know what line of policy she intended to pursue, she published another proclamation, stating "that, considering the great danger which had come to the realm by the differences in religion, she declared for herself that she was of that religion which she had professed from her infancy, and that she would maintain it during her time, and should

be glad that all her subjects would charitably receive it: yet she did not intend to compel any till public order should be taken in it by common assent." She also prohibited all her subjects from calling each other either papist or heretic, and from preaching or expounding scripture, or printing any books or plays, without her special licence.

Some of the Reformers, who continued to preach after the inhibition, were taken into custody, and committed to the Fleet, among whom were Hooper, Coverdale, Dr. Taylor, Rogers, and several others. Cranmer kept himself so quiet at Lambeth, that some began to suspect he was about to turn to the old religion; but the good man was engaged in preparing a protestation against it; on being charged with which he confessed the fact, and was sent to the Tower. Some of his friends advised him to escape the danger to which they saw him exposed, by a timely departure out of the kingdom. But to their affectionate entreaties his grace replied with an apostolic firmness of mind worthy a Christian bishop and a martyr, "I shall not," said he, "dissuade others from avoiding a persecution which they see coming upon them; but considering the principal hand I have had in all the changes relating to religion, and the high office I hold, it would ill become me to flee abroad, as it might be considered a confirmation of the falsehoods which are circulated to defame the servants of God." It was currently reported that mass had been celebrated at Canterbury by order of Cran-

mer, and that he had engaged to say mass before the queen at St. Paul's, than which nothing could be more false. He protested to all the world that the mass was not set up at Canterbury by his order, but by a fawning hypocritical monk (meaning Thornton, suffragan bishop of Dover) without his knowledge; and the other part of the accusation could be refuted by the queen herself. By the end of the year the Tower was so full of prisoners that Cranmer, Ridley, Latimer, and Bradford were all put in one chamber, for which they frequently praised the Lord, as it afforded them an opportunity of conversing together, reading and comparing the Scriptures, and thereby strengthening each other in the true faith, and encouraging each other patiently to suffer the will of God.

A great number of foreigners who came over during the last reign, on seeing the gathering storm which was ready to burst with desolating fury upon the Reformers, obtained permission to return to their own countries, of which many English protestants took advantage, and fled in the disguise of servants. But the council, on becoming acquainted with the fact, sent an order to all the ports not to permit any to leave England as strangers who had not a certificate from the ambassador of the princes to whom they belonged. Notwithstanding these orders, before they were put in force many faithful ministers of Christ had found in other countries a refuge from that storm of papal persecution which was staining their own land with the blood of the

martyrs of Jesus Christ. Here they employed their time and talents in defence of the true faith, and in exposing the abominations of the persecuting church of Rome.

In the month of April, 1554, the archbishop and bishops Ridley and Latimer were removed from the Tower to Windsor, and from thence to the university of Oxford, to dispute with a number of learned men, selected from both universities, on the subjects of the corporal presence by transubstantiation and the propitiatory sacrifice of the mass for the living and the dead. The disputation commenced on the 14th day of April, and Dr. Weston was appointed prolocutor. The archbishop was introduced to a number of bill-men, where the commissioners, to the number of thirty-three, were all seated before the altar. The articles were then read, and a copy of them delivered to him, after which he was given in charge to the mayor, and remanded back to prison. Dr. Ridley was next brought in, and on hearing the articles read, he immediately replied, "They are all false, and spring from a bitter root." He was then asked if he would dispute them. He answered that God should not only have his heart, but, so long as he was able, he would employ both his mouth and his pen in defence of his truth. They then gave him a copy of the articles, and desired him to write his opinion upon them that night, but refused him the use of his books, and ordered the mayor to see him safely lodged in prison. Latimer was brought

in last. The sight of the venerable man, bowed down with age and infirmity, was sufficient to excite sympathy in any human breast. On the articles being read to him, he positively declared he did not believe them; on which he was told to prepare for disputing them on the following day. In vain did he plead his age, sickness, and want of books, as a reason why longer time should be allowed him. But they would neither allow him longer time, pen, ink, nor books, but the New Testament which he held in his hand, when he told them that “he had read it over seven times with deliberation, but could not find in it either the marrow-bones or sinews of the mass.” The boldness of this faithful soldier of Christ greatly offended the commissioners, and Dr. Weston told him that before they had done with him they would make him acknowledge that it had both. To which he replied,—“That you will never do, doctor.” They then clamoured him into silence, without allowing him to explain the terms he had used.

After being several times brought before the commissioners, who, instead of convincing them of their errors by arguments founded upon a fair exposition of scripture (as bishop Ridley writing to one of his friends says), “there were perpetual shoutings, tauntings, reproaches, noise, and confusion.” The charges preferred against Canmer were three, perjury, incontinence, and heresy. The first was founded upon his opposition to the pope’s

supremacy;—the second was on account of his marriage;—and the third was founded upon the part he had acted in the Reformation during the last reign. As soon as the archbishop had liberty to speak, he began to justify his conduct in renouncing the pope's supremacy, the admission of which he proved to be contrary to the natural allegiance of the subject, the fundamental laws of the realm, and the original constitution of the Christian church.—At the close of his speech, he boldly charged Dr. Brooks, bishop of Gloucester (the pope's delegate), with perjury, for sitting there by the pope's authority, which he had solemnly abjured. Brooks endeavoured to vindicate himself, and retort the charge upon the archbishop, by saying that it was he who seduced him to take that oath. The archbishop repelled the charge as a gross untruth, the pope's supremacy having received its death-blow by his predecessor, archbishop Warham, by whose advice king Henry had sent to both universities to examine what foundation it had in the word of God, a reply to which was sent under the university seal, saying, that “by the word of God the supremacy was vested in the king, and not in the pope; and that Brooks had then subscribed this determination,—that it was consequently a vile slander to say that it was by him he was seduced.” This appeal put Brooks into great confusion, but he recovered himself by saying, “We came here to examine you, but I think you examine us.” Dr. Story began to rail at the arch-

bishop in the most indecent manner, for excepting against the authority of his judge; and urged bishop Brooks to require from him a direct answer to the articles of his accusation; or if he continued to deny the pope's authority, and decline answering, to pronounce sentence against him.

Dr. Martin then asked the archbishop who was supreme head of the church of England. He answered, "Christ is head of this member, as he is of the whole body of the catholic church." The doctor then demanded, whether he had not declared king Henry head of the church. "No," replied the archbishop, "for Christ only is head of his church, and of the faith and religion of the same." Several questions were put to him on the subjects of the supremacy and the eucharist, to which he replied in so full and satisfactory a manner, that Brooks thought himself called upon to make another speech, to counteract the effect his defence was calculated to make on the minds of the people. The speech made by Brooks was a compound of scurrilous railings and sophistical misapplications of scripture and the fathers; at the close of which the archbishop was insulted with a mock citation to appear at Rome within fourscore days, there to answer in person. But, although he was kept close prisoner all the time, at the end of the period he was pronounced *contumax*, for wilfully absenting himself from Rome, whither he was legally summoned.

To effect the re-establishment of popery, which

the queen was determined to accomplish, she got a parliament packed up exactly to her mind. The lords, who a few months before were nearly all protestants and zealous promoters of the Reformation, were now, in the reign of Mary, to a man, turned zealous catholics. They passed a bill to repeal the divorce of the queen's mother, and to declare the marriage lawful. By another bill it was enacted that there should be no other form of divine service than what had been in use at the latter end of the reign of Henry VIII.; also that three months' imprisonment should be inflicted on all who were found guilty of having abused the host, broken down altars, crucifixes, or images, in churches, chapels, or church-yards. In a short time after, another bill was passed, to repeal all the laws of king Edward concerning religion, which, after being debated six days, was passed without a division. Thus did Mary and her popish party overturn in a few days what the young king so earnestly desired to establish, and for the attainment of which Cranmer had so long laboured with unceasing assiduity.

At the parliament which met in November, 1554, the archbishop of Canterbury, the lord Guildford Dudley and the lady Jane his wife, with two other sons of the late duke of Northumberland, were brought to their trials; and, pleading guilty to their indictments of high treason, they received sentence of death as traitors. The archbishop appealed to his judges how unwillingly he consented

to the queen's exclusion, reminding them that he did not sign the instrument till those whose profession it was to know the law had signed it first, upon which he submitted himself to the queen's mercy.

Cranmer's life was now left entirely at the queen's mercy, and the sequel will verify the assertion of Solomon, that "the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel." She spared his life at the present, that it might appear that she had overcome her own resentments against him, and that she might thereby acquit herself of all obligation to his grace for saving her life, when her father had determined to take it. Under this mask of mercy in forgiving his treason she concealed her intention of having him persecuted and tortured, with more diabolical cruelty, under those laws which she was determined to revive against the heretics.

Weston, dean of Westminster, was elected prolocutor of the convocation which met about this time, and Bonner presided as bishop of the province. On opening the business, they were informed that it was the queen's pleasure that certain controverted points should be fairly discussed, and their resolutions formed into canons, to be ratified by royal assent. Great care had been taken in the election of proctors to have none returned who would not readily comply with the queen's measures; for, as they could not prevent the deans and archdeacons from sitting in virtue of their office, they found it necessary to ensure a majority in order to accomplish their purpose. Presuming upon

this, the prolocutor moved “ that as an abominable book of common prayer, with a catechism full of heresies, had been printed in the last year of the reign of Edward VI., in the name of that synod, though without its consent, it would be proper to begin with condemning these books, particularly those articles in them which contradict the sacrament of the altar.” He then gave them the following questions, to be discussed after an adjournment of two days :—“ Whether, when the bread and wine were consecrated in the sacrament, all their substance did not vanish, being changed into the body and blood of Christ ; and whether his natural body and blood were not present in the eucharist, either by transubstantiation of the elements into his body and blood, or by the conjunction of concomitance, as some expressed it.”

At the adjourned meeting of the convocation, instead of discussing the proposed questions, the prolocutor presented two bills for the members to subscribe before they could enter upon the debate. These bills were subscribed by all the members of the convocation, except six of the deans and archdeacons, who powerfully opposed such a mode of proceeding, especially Philpot, archdeacon of Winchester. This zealous champion for the truth offered to prove before the queen and council, in opposition to any six they could bring to argue against him, that their sacrifice of the mass was no sacrament, and that Christ was no way present in it, which if he failed to prove, he was willing to

be burned before the palace gates. For this bold challenge the prolocutor threatened to send him to prison. But Philpo retorted upon him by saying, that such conduct was very different from what was promised in the sermon at St. Paul's last Sunday, "that all objections should be answered in this dispute." "But," said he, "ye are a set of men who have dissembled both with God and the world, and are now met to suppress the truth, and propagate false doctrines which ye are not able to maintain. This frank and manly declaration of Philpot led to some warm altercation, accompanied with a torrent of abusive language from the popish party; at length the debate was closed by the prolocutor, who, addressing the Reformers, said, "You have the word, but we have the sword." On the queen being informed that a free debate would not be to the advantage of popery, she dissolved the convocation before they had come to any conclusions. But the Reformers published to the world the disorderly conduct of the prolocutor, and the tumultuous manner in which the popish clergy had clamoured down the protestants, instead of convincing them of their errors by sound arguments.

The marriage of the queen with Philip of Spain excited considerable commotion in various parts of the kingdom. The most serious was an insurrection in Kent, headed by Sir Thomas Wyat, who arrived in London at the head of five thousand men. They forced their way through the troops

at Charing-cross, commanded by the lord chamberlain and Sir John Gaye, and proceeded to Ludgate, where a number of Wyat's men were slain in the streets, and he himself was taken prisoner. Wyat was first taken to the court, and from thence carried to the Tower, where he was beheaded on the eleventh of April, 1554. This rebellion was near proving fatal to lady Elizabeth, and also to lord Courtney. A report was propagated in the court circle that lady Elizabeth was at the head of it, and messengers were sent to bring her from her manor of Ashbridge; and although the messengers found her confined to her bed by sickness, they conveyed her to the Tower, where she was kept a close prisoner for some time, notwithstanding Sir Thomas Wyat fully exonerated both her and lord Courtney from having any thing at all to do with the rebellion for which he suffered. After some time she was allowed to walk in the queen's chamber in the garden, and about the middle of May she was removed to Woodstock. Finding that they could not proceed against her on the ground of conspiracy and rebellion, after the public manner in which Wyat had exonerated her when on the scaffold, another plan was laid for her destruction, founded upon her religion.

Whilst Elizabeth was at Woodstock, bishop Gardiner asked her to give him her opinion on those words of our Saviour, *Hoc est corpus meum*, "This is my body." To which, after a short pause, the princess replied,

"Christ was the Word that spake it;
He took the Bread and brake it;
And what the Word did make it
That I believe, and take it."

There is reason to believe that Elizabeth's wit would not have prevented her sharing a worse fate, had not king Philip exerted all his interest with the queen in her favour. It is related that one of the noblemen in the council advised them to cut off lady Elizabeth's head, when Philip declared that if that advice were acted upon he would immediately leave the kingdom; and Mr. Collier informs us that when Elizabeth was in the Tower, bishop Gardiner procured a warrant signed by some of the privy council for her execution. The lieutenant of the Tower was greatly surprised on the receipt of such a warrant, as it was without the queen's signature, and knowing also that the princess had never been brought to a trial. He therefore applied to the queen to know her pleasure, before he could act upon the warrant, when the queen positively denied all knowledge of it, which spared the life of the princess. Had her majesty dismissed Gardiner from office for such a diabolical act, she might have been thought innocent of this deadly design; but her continuing him in favour is at least presumptive proof that had the warrant been acted upon without her signature she would not have been displeased.

The queen having accomplished the reconciliation of the kingdom to the church of Rome, and a

revival of the laws against heretics, it was debated in council how to proceed against the Reformers. Cardinal Pole recommended the gentler methods of persuasion and instruction; but Gardiner was for exercising rigour and severity, arguing that if examples were made of a few of the heads of the party, the rest would be terrified into immediate compliance. The queen was of the same opinion, and commanded Gardiner, by a commission to himself and some other bishops, to make the experiment. He commenced with proceedings against Mr. Rogers, one of the divinity-lecturers at St. Paul's, London. He had rendered himself obnoxious to the court by a sermon that he preached at St. Paul's Cross, on the queen's accession to the throne, in which he confirmed the doctrines which he and others had there taught in the days of king Edward, and exhorted the people to continue steadfast in the same, and to beware of the false doctrines that were about to be introduced. For preaching this sermon he was sent to prison, where he remained until Gardiner began to act upon his commission. He underwent a number of examinations, the particulars of which may be seen in several works as copied from Fox's *Martyrology*.

After his condemnation he requested to see his wife and children, but the cruel bishop Gardiner tauntingly told him, "She is not thy wife, and she shall not come at thee." On his way from Newgate to Smithfield, where he suffered, he was asked by Mr. Woodroofe, the sheriff, if he would "revoke

his abominable doctrine, and evil opinion of the sacrament of the altar," to which Mr. Rogers replied, "That which I have preached I will seal with my blood." His wife and ten children met him on his way to the place of execution; but this sorrowful sight could neither move his constancy nor the sympathy of his enemies. Before the fire was kindled, a pardon from the queen was presented him on condition that he would recant; but he firmly refused. Mr. Rogers was the first of that blessed company of martyrs who sealed the truth in the fire, in the reign of queen Mary.

The next upon whom Gardiner tried his burning experiment were Mr. Cordmaker, bishop Hooper, and Mr. Saunders. These at their examinations were severally asked whether they would abjure their heretical opinions about the sacrament, and submit to the church as then established; and on their refusing to comply, they were declared obstinate heretics, and were delivered over to the secular power. Bishop Hooper was burnt at Gloucester, in the most barbarous manner. The fire being made of green wood, his lower parts and one arm were consumed before the fire reached his body, in consequence of which he was more than three-quarters of an hour in the fire before he yielded up the ghost. His last words were, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Gardiner, having given his rigorous measure a fair trial, found that so far was it from striking terror into the whole party, that the constancy

and patience with which the martyrs suffered, and the cruelties inflicted by their persecutors, produced the contrary effect. When those who favoured the Reformation saw the ministers of the pure gospel submit to the severest torments and death, rather than renounce their faith,—and the defenders of popery inflicting the most barbarous cruelties on men of the most loyal, peaceable, and pious lives, they concluded that that religion could not be divine in its nature which inflicted such severities on those men who in the midst of the flames could rejoice in Christ Jesus as their Saviour. Others, who were most indifferent about religion, were astonished at the severity of the present measures. The bishops themselves began to be ashamed of it, and Gardiner attempted to exonerate himself and those in the commission with him by casting the blame upon the queen in open court. But as she had declared, at her accession to the throne, that she would not force her religion upon her subjects, the general conclusion was that the king's bigotry and zeal for the popish religion had kindled those fires.

About this time the exiles abroad drew up a spirited petition, and sent it over to the queen, in which they pointed out "the danger of being carried away by a blind and furious zeal to persecute the true members of Christ's church, as St. Paul had done before his conversion."—They reminded her how Cranmer had preserved her life through his intercession with her father, and that

she would find more that loved her, and would consult her interest, among those she was persecuting, than among all her Roman catholic clergy. In proof of their assertion, they referred her to a number of passages in the writings of Gardiner, Bonner, and Tunstal, against the pope's supremacy and her mother's marriage; and concluded that such men, by their own confession, had no conscience, but were actuated only by their fears and interests. They reminded her that the Lord had entrusted her with the sword for the protection of her peaceable people, and that she must be accountable to him for their blood if she left them to the mercy of such ravening wolves. The petitioners next addressed the nobility, and warned them of the loss of the abbey lands they had lately purchased. They also addressed the people at large on the loss of their liberties, and being brought under the Spanish yoke. They then exhorted them to repent of their sins, which had brought such heavy judgments upon the nation, and to intercede with her majesty to put a stop to this deluge of blood; by granting to her subjects the same liberty she allowed to strangers, that of leaving the country unmolested.

Whatever impression this petition might make on the minds of others, it produced no good effect on the mind of the queen, who was determined to make every thing give way to her bigotry. After a few weeks the fires were rekindled, and she commanded the nobility and gentry to countenance the

executions by their presence, and prevent any attempt at riot. Gardiner withdrew himself from the commission, and was succeeded by Bonner, bishop of London, whose barbarous and cruel deeds have rarely been equalled, even among cannibals. But we shall not trace him through those rivers of blood with which, in executing the queen's orders, he deluged the nation. We have related sufficient to show both the spirit and practice of popery, especially as no line of distinction can be drawn between ancient and modern popery. What popery was in the beginning it is now, and ever will be. By claiming infallibility, it admits of no amendment. Let the members of that community once admit the possibility of a man's entering heaven without the pope's key, and popery is no more. But not till then will she ever lose any portion of her persecuting spirit. To those who wish to see the malignant spirit of popery more fully developed, we recommend a perusal of Fox's "Acts and Monuments of the Martyrs."

Whilst Mary was giving such *flaming* proof of her zeal for religion, her conscience became loaded with an intolerable burden. This did not, however, arise from reflecting on her cruel conduct towards her best subjects; for such is the spirit and doctrine of her church, as she was taught by her spiritual guides, that the more protestant blood she spilt the greater service she rendered religion. It was not the blood of martyred saints that occasioned her remorse, but, as she told the principal officers

of state, it was on account of the church lands which were held by the crown. She said that, as these lands “were taken away by unlawful means, and in the time of the schism, she could not keep them without injustice, and she was therefore determined to surrender them to the church: if they should object that her crown would be then so poor that she could not maintain her dignity, she must tell them in return that she valued the salvation of her soul more than ten kingdoms; and she thanked God her husband was of the same mind with herself.” She then directed the lord chancellor to inform the legate of her design, and to carry him the rental of the lands. The legate readily consented to the queen’s proposal; he accepted the money on behalf of the pope, and sent an agent to Rome to have it confirmed.

This affair led to a further developement of popish policy, from which we learn that the promises made by his legate in his name, and by his authority, have no weight or influence on the decisions of his holiness the pope. After the messenger arrived at Rome, and had delivered the documents and money from the legate, his holiness, without naming England, published a bull in general terms, in which he excommunicated all those who retained any church or abbey-lands, and the princes, prelates, and magistrates who did not assist in the execution of this bull. The publication of this bull excited considerable alarm throughout the land, but none suffered so sensibly

under the dread apprehension of its power as did the infatuated queen, who, fancying that she was near the time of her delivery, was terrified at the idea of dying under sentence of excommunication for having robbed the church. She immediately sent off an embassy to Rome, to make reconciliation with the pope; but before the embassy arrived pope Julius II. died, and was succeeded by Marcellus II., who only enjoyed his triple crown for twenty-two days, and was succeeded by Paul IV., one of the most proud, pompous, and cruel tyrants that ever found his way into St. Peter's chair. The English ambassadors entered Rome on the day of his election, but he would not admit them to an audience until they had agreed to accept of a grant of the title of the kingdom of Ireland, which Henry had assumed during the schism. He declared that God had given him a power to destroy or to build kingdoms at his pleasure. The queen having instructed the ambassadors to comply with whatever the pope was pleased to demand, on their acquiescence his holiness admitted them into the consistory, where, falling prostrate at his feet, they confessed that England had fallen into the sin of schism, and humbly asked pardon of the holy see. The pope told them that he was ready to do every thing in his power to gratify the king and queen, who had always maintained their allegiance; but that the church lands must be restored to the last farthing; for, as they belonged to God, they could not be

kept without incurring damnation to the possessors; that his own authority did not extend so far as to allow him to profane the things dedicated to God. His holiness told them further, that he should send a collector to England, to receive the tribute due to the holy see; "for it could not be expected that St. Peter would open the gates of heaven to them if they denied him his rights on earth." The ambassadors seeing the haughty temper of the pope, who would listen to no terms but his own, became as humble and submissive as he could wish. Thus ended their embassy, having effected nothing but a servile acquiescence in the pope's will.

About this time complaints were made at court that the protestant preachers were connived at by the magistrates in various parts of the kingdom. Upon this information, general orders were sent to all sheriffs to seize all such ministers. At the same time instructions were sent to the magistrates to appoint spies in all the parishes to give information respecting every person's conduct. This mean artifice betrayed so much of the spirit of the inquisition that it was imputed to Spanish counsels, which rendered the court very unpopular.

The king and queen, being informed that not a fire had been kindled during the past month, wrote a very sharp letter to Bonner, admonishing him to perform the office of a good shepherd, by either recovering the heretics, or proceeding against them according to law. Never man had

less need of a spur to quicken his steps in the pursuit of blood than had bishop Bonner; for in the month of June, he brought nine protestants to the stake in the county of Essex; and in other parts of the country he prosecuted his cruelties with redoubled fury.

Gardiner had hitherto preserved Cranmer out of state policy, contrary to the opinion both of the queen and council. The wily chancellor suggested that if Cranmer could be drawn in to sign a recantation it would more effectually serve their cause, by staggering the faith of the Reformers, than by bringing a number of them to the stake. To accomplish their purpose, he was removed from prison to a commodious suit of apartments with the dean of Christ-church. Here he met with every remark of respect and attention, accompanied with the most flattering promises of the queen's favour, with the restoration to his former dignities and honours, if he would recant. For a time this veteran champion of the Reformation stood with unshaken firmness, equally unmoved by the smiles of court flattery and the terrors of a martyr's death. But at last the artless prelate fell a prey to the vilest hypocrisy that was ever practised. The circumstances connected with the recantation of this great and good man have been grossly mis-stated by several historians. Mr. Strype has related how he was artfully drawn in to sign six different papers; the first expressed in very ambiguous words, and the other five all purporting to be ex-

planatory of the first. Had Cranmer been aware of their base designs, he would never have yielded to have prolonged his life by such dishonourable means. But he greatly erred by giving them credit for being as sincere as himself; and when by their subtle artifice they had drawn him to a first and second recantation, we may easily conceive how the shame of a retreat, after he had gone so far, and an unwillingness to lose the benfit of his past subscription, would prevail with him to persevere. The first paper which he was prevailed upon to sign read thus:—"Forasmuch as the king and queen's majesties, by consent of their parliament, have received the pope's authority in this realm, I am content to submit myself to their laws herein, and to take the pope for the chief head of this church of England, so far as God's laws and the laws and customs of this realm will permit. Thomas Cranmer."

The queen and her council considered this declaration as not sufficiently explicit, and another was sent for his subscription, expressed in fewer words but more full and unreserved. This was as follows:—"I, Thomas Cranmer, doctor in divinity, do subscribe myself to the Catholic church of Christ, and unto all their laws and ordinances. Thomas Cranmer." When this was presented at court, with his signature affixed, it was objected to on the ground of ambiguity, and a third more full and explicit was required of him, which was this:—"I consent to submit myself to the king

and queen's majesties, and to all their laws and ordinances, as well concerning the pope's supremacy as others; and I shall, from time to time, move and stir all others to do the like, to the uttermost of my power, and to live in quietness and obedience to their majesties, most humbly, without murmur or grudging against any of their holy proceedings. And, for my book which I have written, I am content to submit to the judgment of the catholic church and the next general council. Thomas Cranmer."

The above, like the former, was not deemed satisfactory, and was followed by a fourth expressed in these words:—"Be it known by these presents, that I, Thomas Cranmer, doctor of divinity, and late archbishop of Canterbury, do firmly, stedfastly, and assuredly believe in all the articles and points of the Christian religion and catholic faith, as the catholic church doth believe, and hath believed from the beginning. Moreover, as concerning the sacraments of the said church, I believe unfeignedly in all points as the catholic church doth and hath believed from the beginning of the Christian religion. In witness whereof I have humbly subscribed my hand unto these presents, the 18th day of February, in the year 1555. Thomas Cranmer."

Having brought their diabolical scheme to answer thus far, they at last threw off the mask, and got him to sign other two, which are given at large in Fox's Martyrology, and have been generally considered as his only recantation, without noticing

the gradationary steps by which he was brought to renounce and anathematize all Lutheran and Zuinglian heresies and errors,—to declare the pope to be Christ's vicar, to whom all Christians ought to be subject,—and his belief of the doctrine of transubstantiation, the seven sacraments, purgatory, &c. In the last he is made to charge himself as a blasphemer, an enemy of Christ, and a murderer of souls, on account of his being the promoter of king Henry's divorce, and of all the calamities, schisms, and heresies, of which that was the fountain. If proof were wanting to establish the perfidy of the pope's agents, and to prove that no dependance can be placed on their most solemn pledges made to protestants, the following fact may suffice, when it is known that the writ was signed for his execution to take place on the 21st of March, before they brought him the last paper, which he signed on the 18th of the same month.

Dr. Cole was sent to Oxford to prepare a sermon which he was to preach on the occasion; and the lords Williams and Chandos were ordered to be there with their retinue on the day appointed, to prevent any disturbance. Cranmer had been removed back to the prison, where he was visited by Cole, who asked him if he stood firm in the faith he had subscribed, to which Cranmer answered in the affirmative. At this time he had not the least suspicion that they intended to burn him. Next morning he was visited again by Cole, who, after exhorting him to constancy, gave him money to

give to the poor as he saw convenient. Soon after he was brought to St. Mary's church, under pretence of hearing a sermon, when he was placed on a low platform, over against the pulpit. Dr. Cole then commenced a sermon, the first part of which was to give an account of Cranmer's conversion to the true catholic church, and the second was to assign the queen's reasons why it was expedient that he should suffer, notwithstanding his recantation. And, by way of conclusion, he exhorted the archbishop to bear up with courage against the terrors of death, and, by the example of the thief on the cross, encouraged him not to despair, since he was returned, though late, into the bosom of the catholic church, and to the profession of the true apostolical faith. He also assured him that masses should be said for the repose of his soul in all the churches at Oxford. This was the first intimation Cranmer had of his intended execution, which filled him with horror at their base inhumanity, and the unparalleled cruelty of their proceedings. A more melancholy spectacle England never beheld: a venerable archbishop, who for more than twenty years had held the second station in the kingdom, and was universally beloved by all classes for that temper and conduct which adorns the Christian character, now clothed in rags, and set up as a gazing-stock to the world, betrayed by falsehood and dissimulation to act contrary to his conscience, and now about to be hurled into eternity by the most cruel means, without any previous warning.

It is utterly impossible to express the inward agony of soul he felt, which for a time found no relief but in a flood of tears; sometimes lifting up his eyes to heaven, and then casting them down towards the ground, with evident marks of the deepest dejection. When Cole had ended his sermon, he called upon Cranmer for a confession of his faith, in order to satisfy the world that he died a good catholic. He consented to make a declaration of his faith, but he first kneeled down, and in the most solemn manner prayed thus:—

“O Father of heaven; O Son of God, Redeemer of the world; O Holy Ghost, proceeding from them both; three persons, and one God; have mercy upon me, most wretched caitiff and miserable sinner! I, who have offended both heaven and earth, and more grievously than tongue can express, whither shall I go, or where shall I fly for succour? To heaven I am ashamed to lift up mine eyes; and on earth I find no refuge. What shall I then do? Shall I despair? God forbid! O good God, thou art merciful, and refusest none who come unto thee for succour; to thee therefore do I run; to thee do I humble myself; saying, O Lord my God, my sins be great, but yet have mercy upon me, for thy infinite mercy. O God the Son, thou wast not made man,—this great mystery was not wrought for few or small offences only,—neither didst thou give thy Son to die, O God the Father, for our smaller crimes, but for the greatest sins of the whole world, so that the sinner return unto

thee with a penitent heart, as I do now in this moment. Wherefore take pity on me, O Lord, whose property is always to have mercy; for though my sins be great, yet thy mercy is greater,—I crave nothing, O Lord, for my own merits, but for thy name's sake, and that it may be glorified thereby, and for thy dear Son Jesus Christ's sake, in whose words I conclude: Our Father," &c.

Having finished his prayer, he rose from his knees, and made a confession of his faith, beginning with the creed, and concluding with these words: "And I believe every word and sentence taught by our Saviour Jesus Christ, his apostles and prophets, in the Old and New Testament. And now, added he, I come to the great thing that so much troubleth my conscience more than any thing I ever did or said in my whole life; and that is, the setting abroad a writing contrary to the truth which I thought in my heart, and written for fear of death and to save my life, if it might be,—that is, all such bills or papers which I have written since my degradation, wherein I have written many things untrue. And forasmuch as my hand offended, writing contrary to my heart, my hand shall first be punished. For, *may* I come to the fire it shall be first burned. As for the pope, I refuse him as Christ's enemy and antichrist, with all his false doctrine; and, as for the sacrament, I believe as I have taught in my book against the bishop of Winchester." Here he was interrupted by a croud of papists, who, thunder-struck with

this unexpected declaration, admonished him not to dissemble ; to which he replied with tears,— “ Since I have lived hitherto, I have been a hater of falsehood, and a lover of simplicity, and never before this time have dissembled.” He would have proceeded, but they pulled him off the platform with the most brutal fury, and dragged him away to the stake over against Baliol College, where Latimer and Ridley had suffered martyrdom. After he had prayed a short time, he undressed himself, and standing in his shirt, without shoes, was fastened with a chain to the stake. Before the fire was kindled, they urged him to agree to his former recantation, but he replied, “ This is the hand that wrote, and therefore it shall first suffer punishment.” On the fire being kindled, he stretched out his right hand into the flame, and never removed it but once to wipe his face, until it was consumed, repeatedly crying aloud, “ This unworthy hand ! ” He appeared to suffer but little pain from the fire, never stirring all the while, but, with his eyes fixed upwards, he repeatedly cried out, “ Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Thus died Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, in the sixty-seventh year of his age, and the twenty-third of his primacy. The diabolical intrigues and hypocrisies by which he was brought to the stake, and the inhuman cruelties with which he was treated, were such as could scarcely be exceeded in the infernal regions.

Whilst the inhuman treatment of Cranmer ex-

hibits the spirit and perfidy of popish proceedings, we cannot but acknowledge a retributive providence harmonizing with the declarations of God's word, the principle of which is, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." This principle was strikingly recognized in the case of Jacob, who deceived his father to the injury of his brother Esau, and was himself deceived by his father-in-law Laban. Cranmer deceived the papists, by writing with his hand what he did not believe in his heart, and they deceived him, by promising him life and liberty, on condition of his recantation, when at the same time his death by fire was determined upon. But, after all, whoever takes an impartial view of the period in which Cranmer lived, and the difficulties with which he had to contend, must give him credit for those virtues and that prudence which raise character to a distinguished elevation, though strongly marked with the frailties of human nature. In which of the martyred saints was displayed more heroic constancy in suffering, or deeper regret at the remembrance of his former faults? We believe it is not saying too much to affirm that his equal in every respect has not since filled the see of Canterbury.

We do not intend to trace the steps of Bonner and his brethren through all the rivers of protestant blood which they shed, during the period that popery triumphantly drove her car of fire through this unhappy kingdom. Such as were but suspected of heresy, were examined upon the articles

of the corporal presence of Christ, and, if their answers were not satisfactory, they were without any further proof condemned to the flames. Out of all the number that were condemned as heretics during Mary's reign, three only received pardon. Cardinal Pole being informed that out of sixteen that Bonner had condemned to the flames, there were hopes that three of them might be reclaimed, made application to the council, and obtained an order for these three persons to be committed to his care, and, having prevailed upon two of them to recant, he procured them the queen's pardon.

The queen met with a prompt opposition to her design of restoring the religious houses, both from the nobility and gentry. When the subject was mentioned in the house of commons, several of the members put their hands upon their swords and boldly said, they knew how to defend their property. As she could not accomplish her undertaking in favour of the monks and nuns, she determined to destroy every thing that had appeared against them. For this purpose, a commission was granted to Bonner and two others "to search all registers in order to find out the professions made against the pope, and the scrutinies made in abbeys which tended to the subversion of good religion and religious houses, which, having gathered, they were to carry to the cardinal, that they might be disposed of as the queen should direct." This commission was very gratifying to many of queen

Mary's bishops, who had signed declarations against the pope and the old corruptions which they had again embraced. The destruction of the registers and records by these commissioners has left an irreparable chasm in the ecclesiastical history of the two preceding reigns. The zealous labours of the commissioners were not confined to the search for heretical books; for, when at Cambridge, they entered a process against the dead bodies of Bucer and Fagius, two German Reformers. The visitors having finished their process against the dead bodies, on the arrival of a letter from the queen confirming their sentence, the bodies were taken out of their graves, and, together with a number of heretical books, were burnt to ashes. But a still more ridiculous process than this was carried on at Oxford against the body of Peter Martyr's wife; in this case the commissioners met with an unexpected difficulty, for she was a foreigner and could speak no English, consequently no witnesses could be brought to say that they had heard her utter heresy. To meet this knotty case, they sent for fresh instructions to the cardinal, who directed that as it was notorious that she had been a nun, and had married contrary to her vow, her body should be taken up and buried in a dunghill as a person dying under excommunication, which sentence was executed accordingly.

The period was now approaching when a merciful Providence was about to remove this flaming scourge from his bleeding church; but the queen's cruelty

increased as she approached nearer her end. On the 6th of June she published a proclamation, commanding "that whosoever had any books of heresy, treason, and sedition, and did not burn them without reading them, or showing them to any other person, should be esteemed rebels, and without any further delay be executed by martial law;"—also forbidding any man to pray for heretics at the stake, to speak to them, or even to say so much as "God help them."

Whilst these tragedies were acting in different parts of England, the protestants in Ireland had hitherto met with much milder treatment. But Mary's bigotry having eradicated every spark of human sympathy from her breast, her burning fury was no longer to be stopped in its march by the waters of St. George's Channel, for she resolved to write her name in bloody remembrance in Ireland. To accomplish her purpose, she gave a commission to Dr. Cole, one of Bonner's most sanguinary agents, but its operation was prevented by the following singular circumstance, which is related on unquestionable authority. When Cole arrived at Chester, on his way to Ireland, finding that the packet did not sail that day, he put up at an inn kept by Mrs. Elizabeth Edmonds. Here the doctor was waited upon by the mayor of the city, who was a papist. In the course of conversation with the mayor, the doctor took a leathern box out of his cloak-bag, saying, "Here is a commission that shall lash the heretics of Ireland." This barbarous

boast was made in the presence of Mrs. Edmonds, who was a protestant, and was greatly affected on account of a brother she had then living in Dublin. Whilst the mayor was taking his leave, and the doctor was complimenting him down stairs, Mrs. Edmonds opened the box, took out the commission, and enclosed in the same cover a pack of cards with the knave of clubs at the top. On the doctor's return to the room, not suspecting any trick, he put up the box in his bag, and arrived with it in Dublin in the month of September, 1558. On his arrival, he immediately waited upon the viceroy, lord Fitzwalters, to whom he presented the box, which, on being opened, was found to contain nothing but the paper and cards, which put the whole company into the greatest confusion. They were relieved from their embarrassment by the lord-deputy, who pleasantly remarked, “ We must procure another commission, and in the mean time let us shuffle the cards.”

The disappointed doctor was immediately ordered back to England for a fresh commission; but, whilst waiting for a fair wind, the news arrived that queen Mary was dead. This was a very happy event for the protestants of Ireland, who by so singular an incident escaped a cruel persecution. After queen Elizabeth ascended the throne, on being informed of this circumstance, she settled a pension of £40 per annum on Mrs. Edmonds for life, for having been the means of saving the lives of her protestant subjects.

On the 5th of November the parliament was opened under the most gloomy circumstances. Calais was lost, and an invasion was apprehended both from France and Scotland,—the treasury was empty, and the dissatisfaction with the government was general throughout the kingdom. The queen's health was rapidly declining, which the state of her affairs tended greatly to accelerate. The mortification of having published her pregnancy, which now proved a dropsical disorder,—the despair of issue,—the neglect and disgust of her husband,—so increased her natural melancholy and sourness of temper, that it became evident to her attendants that she had not long to live. When she began to feel that her end was near, her chief concern was about the church, fearing that the fabric she had been propping with pillars of fire and blood would fall to the ground at her dissolution. The popish prelates were well aware of this, knowing that Elizabeth was a protestant in her heart, and that even policy would prompt her to profess it, as the pope had pronounced her “a bastard.” Several of the catholic bishops suggested to the queen the danger of allowing Elizabeth to live, and remarked on the impolicy of lopping off a few of the small branches, whilst the tree was allowed to stand. It is evident, from the disposition and conduct of Mary, that neither the principle of common humanity nor the sympathy of a sister would have prevented her from taking away the life of Elizabeth, whom she looked upon as a bastard and an heretic.

On the 17th of November, 1558, Mary closed her mortal life, in the forty-third year of her age, after an inglorious and sanguinary reign of about five years and a half. On the same day died cardinal Pole, archbishop of Canterbury. He was of the blood-royal of England,—of extensive learning, and naturally of a mild and amiable temper, which led him to oppose the inhuman severities exercised by Gardiner and Bonner. Pole would have appeared to the world as a most amiable character, had not his mind been biassed by the superstitious and intolerant spirit of popery, which justified his commissioning others to act a part towards the protestants from which his own nature revolted.

During the short inglorious reign of Mary, it is stated on good authority that two hundred and seventy-seven protestants were brought to the stake, and suffered martyrdom for the sake of Christ. Among these were five bishops, twenty-one ministers, eight gentlemen, twenty-six wives, twenty widows, nine virgins, two boys, and two infants. The rest, to the number of one hundred and eighty-four, were artisans, husbandmen, servants, and labourers. Sixteen perished in prison through the cruelties inflicted there, and were all buried in dunghills; and a considerable number that lay under sentence of death were released when queen Elizabeth ascended the throne. The reign of Mary was in every respect the most calamitous with which this nation was ever cursed, and her death was lamented by none but the popish priests. A

contemporary historian has remarked that her history ought to be transmitted down to posterity in characters of blood. Every true friend to civil and religious liberty ought to pray most fervently that Almighty God, of his great mercy, may defend his country from the superstitions and cruelties of the antichristian church of Rome.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN ELIZABETH, IN 1558.
TO HER DEATH IN 1602.

A FEW hours after the death of queen Mary, the event was announced by the lord chancellor to the house of lords, which was then sitting. The members of that house were most of them Roman catholics, and on the annunciation of the queen's death, that august assembly was for a time inwrapt in gloomy silence. Having recovered from their consternation, they sent for the house of commons, when the lord chancellor informed them that the lords intended to proclaim the princess Elizabeth, whose title to the crown was indisputable, in which he hoped the commons would concur. The closing part of the chancellor's speech produced such a sudden burst of feeling that the walls of St. Stephen's reverberated the sound, "God save queen Elizabeth! long and happily may she reign!" The parliament was then declared to be dissolved by the death of Mary, when they immediately proceeded to the proclamation of the new queen, which produced inexpressible joy among all ranks, the popish clergy excepted.

The queen, who was then at Hatfield, removed the same day to the Charter-house, London. She

was met at Highgate by the council, and all the bishops, when she presented her hand for each of them to kiss, except Bonner, whom she looked upon as being too much defiled with blood to be indulged with such a civility. On the following day, when she passed through the city to the Tower, the people expressed their joy with enthusiastic acclamations, which she returned with the most courteous affability. As she was passing along Cheapside, one of the populace presented her with a Bible, which she received with both hands, kissed it, and, pressing it to her breast, said, "This book has been my chief delight, and shall be the rule by which I will regulate my government." On entering the Tower, she could not refrain from remarking the contrast between her present state and that under which, a few years before, she had been brought there a prisoner, where she was exposed to all the bigoted malignity of her cruel enemies. She fell on her knees, and, in the presence of her numerous attendants, most devoutly returned thanks to Almighty God for having delivered her out of the hands of her bloody persecutors,—a deliverance, as she said, not less miraculous than that of Daniel from the den of lions. In this act of piety she appears to have buried the remembrance of all her past injuries; and even Sir Henry Bennifield, to whose custody she had been committed, and who treated her with the greatest severity, never experienced, during any part of her reign, the least mark of resentment.

Elizabeth immediately notified her accession to the crown to all the princes of Europe, and wrote with her own hand to king Philip of Spain, to whom she considered herself much indebted for his friendly interposition with the late queen on her behalf, which she acknowledged in terms of respectful gratitude. Her message to the pope was merely to acquaint him with the recent change, and express a desire on her part to be on friendly terms with his holiness. The haughty pontiff received the queen's message in a very ungracious manner. He declared that England was a fee of the holy see,—that it was presumptuous in Elizabeth, who was illegitimate, to take the crown without his consent, but if she would renounce her pretensions, and refer herself wholly to his clemency, he would show her a fatherly affection in every thing that was not incompatible with the dignity of the apostolic see. When Elizabeth was informed how the pope had treated her message, she immediately revoked the powers she had granted to Carne, the English agent at Rome, and recalled him, which broke off all further intercourse between the two courts during this reign.

The very critical state in which the national affairs were found at the death of Mary required all that firmness, caution, and prudence, for which Elizabeth was so remarkable. In forming her ministry, she retained twelve of her sister's counsellors,—and added eight others, who were known to be warmly attached to the protestant interest,

out of whom she formed her cabinet council. She created Sir Richard Bacon lord-keeper, and Sir William Cecil secretary of state. With these ministers she frequently consulted on the best means of restoring and establishing the protestant religion, and of promoting peace and unity in her infant government. Sir W. Cecil informed her that the far greater part of the nation were in favour of the Reformation; for, though her sister had compelled them to profess the "old faith," yet their affections had been more completely alienated from it through the cruelties exercised against the protestants by her ministers. By a gracious Providence, the interests of the sovereign and the inclinations of the subjects happily concurred. Her title to the crown was incompatible with the authority of the Roman pontiff; for a sentence so solemnly pronounced by two popes against her mother's marriage could not possibly be recalled without inflicting a mortal wound on the credit of the see of Rome; and, if she were allowed to retain the crown, it could only be on an uncertain and dependent tenure. She had nothing to fear from the pope's pronouncing sentence of excommunication against her, as he could never induce the courts of France and Spain to act in concert to execute it, their interests being so different that the one becoming her enemy would ensure her the alliance of the other. But it was thought most advisable not to make any material alteration in any thing until the queen had called a parliament,

which would best discover the minds of the people. That her cautious measures might not discourage the protestants, she, in the mean time, allowed the communion to be administered in both kinds, and gave orders for the service-book of king Edward to be revised by a committee of the most learned divines.

As soon as Elizabeth's accession to the throne was known on the continent, and that she had liberated all the protestant prisoners in England who were confined on account of religion, great numbers of exiles returned from abroad, being reduced to the greatest distress by extreme poverty. But it is greatly to be regretted that their sufferings had not taught them a little more moderation; for whilst they protested against the errors of popery, and the spirit of its ministers, they began to show their zeal for the *new* in the true spirit of the *old* religion. Some of them openly insulted the Romish priests,—destroyed the images, and made use of the service-book of king Edward without authority. To prevent the unhappy effects of such untempered zeal, the queen found it necessary to inhibit all preaching without a special licence.

As soon as the funeral rites for queen Mary were performed, preparations were made on a large scale for the coronation of Elizabeth. But a serious difficulty presented itself in the way of performing this ceremony. All the reformed bishops but three were now dead, Barlow, Scory, and

Coverdale. Barlow had resigned, and the process by which the other two had been deprived not being reversed their qualifications might be questioned ; and all the popish bishops refused to crown her, under an idea that it was her intention to bring religion back to the state in which it was left by king Edward. After a lengthy and tedious negotiation, the court prevailed on Oglethorp, bishop of Carlisle, to perform the ceremony, and he placed the imperial crown upon her head, January the 15th, 1559.

Several bishops died about the same time that queen Mary did, so that Elizabeth had now to provide for six vacant sees. The queen was aware that the peace of her government might be seriously affected by the character of the men who might be appointed to fill those vacant sees. She resolved to appoint Dr. Parker, who had been her first preceptor, and chaplain to her mother, to the see of Canterbury ; but such was the doctor's modesty, and love of retirement, that he declined accepting the see until he was literally compelled to comply with the queen's command.

The election of new members to serve in parliament went entirely against the catholic interest, and on the 25th of January, 1559, the new parliament was opened by the lord keeper, who gave an affecting account of the nation, both in its civil and religious departments. The prudence and moderation with which Elizabeth began her reign is worthy of admiration. She did not imitate her sister's

conduct by passing an act declaring the validity of her mother's marriage, nor by repealing the act formerly made against her own legitimacy, as she well knew that such an act would transmit to posterity some severe reflections on her father's memory. In reply to the opening speech the house returned a unanimous declaration, "that queen Elizabeth was, and ought to be, as well by the word of God as the common and statute laws of the realm, the lawful, undoubted, and true heir to the crown, lawfully descended from the blood-royal, according to the order of succession settled in the 35th of Henry VIII."

The first bill brought into parliament to try how they stood affected towards the Reformation was a bill for suppressing the monasteries lately erected, and for restoring the tenths and first fruits to the crown. This act was passed in four days, being opposed in its progress by only the archbishop of York and eight other bishops; for such was the vacillancy of the lords temporal that every one of them, who two years before voted for restoring these emoluments to the church, now voted for them to be returned to the crown.

The next bill that was brought into parliament relating to religion met with more pointed opposition in the upper house. It was an act to restore the supremacy to the crown, and to the queen the right of nominating the bishops, the same as had been exercised by her father and brother. This act also enjoined that the public worship

should be performed in the vulgar tongue, upon the plan of king Edward's service-book, as received and altered by the learned divines appointed by her majesty. This law was strenuously opposed by all the bishops; but, though they had the advantage of the temporal peers in the debate, the vote was carried against them. By this act it was declared “that the authority of visiting, correcting, and reforming all things in the church was to be for ever annexed to the crown, which the queen and her successors might, by their letters patent, depute to any persons to exercise in their name, to visit, reform, redress, order, correct, and amend all errors, heresies, schisms, abuses, contempts, offences, and enormities whatsoever; provided that they have no power to determine any thing to be heresy but what has been adjudged to be so by the authority of the canonical scripture, or by the first four general councils, or any of them, or such as shall hereafter be declared to be heresy by the high court of parliament, with the assent of the clergy in convocation.” On this act was founded the “High Commission Court” over all ecclesiastical affairs. Some of the evils to which the abuse of this court gave birth will be noticed in the subsequent part of this history.

There were some clauses in this bill which bore hard on certain characters. The queen had objected to the title *supreme head* of the church, and had it changed for *supreme governor*; and to this title all bishops and persons in office, civil or ecclesiastical,

were obliged to swear under the penalty of forfeiting their office, and of being incapable of holding any other public employment during life.

Soon after the meeting of parliament, the convocation met in obedience to her majesty's writ, when the archdeacon of Canterbury was chosen prolocutor; but, before they transacted any business, a message was sent from her majesty, commanding them, under the pains of a premunire, not to make any canons. This message so enervated the lower house that they did nothing more than make a declaration of their faith in the doctrines of the corporal presence in the sacrament,—of the propitiatory sacrifice in the mass for the living and the dead, and the exclusion of the laity from all power in ecclesiastical affairs. These few articles were signed by most of the members, and presented by Bonner from the upper house to the lord keeper.

The restrictions laid upon the convocation were but a prelude to what had been previously determined upon by the queen and her ministers, viz., a public disputation before the privy council and both houses of parliament, between nine Roman catholic bishops and an equal number of protestant divines. The points to be disputed were three:—
1. Whether it was not against scripture, and the custom of the ancient church, to use a tongue unknown to the people in the common prayers and sacraments." 2. "Whether every church had not authority to appoint, change, and take away

rites and ceremonies, so that the same were done to edifying." 3. "Whether it could be proved by the word of God that in the mass there was a propitiatory sacrifice for the dead and the living." The terms of the dispute were, that the bishops and their party should open the debate, which should be conducted in writing, by reading their papers on the first question, and then the protestant divines should read theirs. These papers were then to be mutually exchanged, that they might be reciprocally answered; and thus with the other two. The discussion was appointed by the queen to be held in Westminster Abbey, on the last day in March, 1559.

On the day appointed the lord keeper, Bacon, took the chair as moderator, and to see that the parties conformed to the proposed terms. White, bishop of Winchester, was appointed to read the paper of the catholic bishops on the first question; but he pretended that their paper was not ready,—that they did not understand that the dispute was to be conducted in writing. This was a mere jesuitical shuffle; they had prepared their paper, but they agreed among themselves not to give a copy of it. The moderator insisting on a strict compliance with the proposed terms, the bishops desired that Dr. Cole, dean of St. Paul's, might deliver their sentiment upon the first question, though it was not sufficiently digested to be committed to writing. Assent being given, the dean discharged a volley of the most vehement scurrility and abuse against

the protestant heretics, which he read from his paper. When the dean had delivered his speech, Horne, late dean of Durham, who was appointed by the protestant party, read the paper they had prepared on the first question, and then delivered it to the lord keeper, to be given to the bishops when they should bring him theirs. Thus ended the dispute of the first day, with shouts of applause on the protestant side. From the feeling expressed, the bishops were convinced that it would militate much against their cause to continue the dispute; they resolved therefore not to proceed any further. On the second day, when the bishops were desired to deliver their opinion on the next question, they insisted that their reply to the paper read by Horne on the preceding day should be first heard. The moderator reminded them that according to the terms agreed upon no answer was to be read on either side until all the questions were gone through, when both sides were to proceed in their reply. They then declared that what Cole had delivered the preceding day was extempore, and not the sentiments of the party. But the fallacy of this was exposed by referring to what they then expressed on the subject. To bring the debate to a final close, the bishops of Winchester and Lincoln asserted that the doctrines of the catholic church were already established, and ought not to be disputed except in a synod of divines,—that it was too great an encouragement to heretics to hear them argue against the faith before an unlearned

multitude,—and that the queen, by appointing this dispute, had incurred the sentence of excommunication, which they threatened to execute upon both her and her council. This bold assertion put an end to the dispute at once; and the two bishops were immediately committed to the Tower for their insolence. This public disputation terminated like many others, without either party being convinced that they were in error. The catholics complained that the lord keeper was prepossessed against them, and that the dispute was only designed to grace the intended change in religion with the pomp of a triumph; whilst the protestants affirmed, that the catholics were afraid to venture their cause to the hazard of a defeat. The different manner in which this dispute was conducted, from that which was held in queen Mary's time, left a powerful impression on the public mind in favour of the reformed religion.

The committee of divines who were appointed to revise king Edward's service-book having finished their undertaking, presented it to the parliament in nearly the same form that we now have the book of Common Prayer. The only alteration made by parliament was one of little moment. The committee had left the people at liberty to receive the sacrament either standing or kneeling; but by the act passed for establishing uniformity in public worship, the people were compelled to receive it on their knees. The Reformers were far from being unanimous on the provisions of this

bill. Some of them were strongly attached to the service of the English church at Geneva; others, who were indifferent about rites and ceremonies, were for withdrawing no further from the church of Rome than was necessary to preserve the purity of the faith and the independency of the church. These were the sentiments of the queen, who thought that her brother Edward had gone too far, and she was for retaining images, crucifixes, and crosses,—instrumental and vocal music, with a number of popish habits. It was in reference to these things that she had the following clause inserted in the act of uniformity, empowering her to “ordain and publish such further ceremonies and rites as may be for the advancement of God’s glory, the edifying of his church, and the reverence of Christ’s holy mysteries and sacraments.” The rigour and severity with which this act was executed gave rise to the party called puritans, whose aim was to establish a more pure and spiritual form of worship and discipline than what the act provided.

After her majesty had dissolved the parliament, she summoned the bishops and principal clergy to court, when she reminded them of the acts of supremacy and uniformity, and exhorted them to relinquish the superstitions of the church of Rome. In reply to her majesty, the archbishop of York, in the name of the rest, stated, that the engagements of the apostolic see, entered into by the late queen, were equally binding on her successors, and that unless these engagements were made

good, and all heresy exterminated, the kingdom must lie under perpetual ignominy and censure. The queen replied, in the most prompt and plain terms, "that she had not called her parliament and clergy together to make a covenant with the pope of Rome but with God, that her sister had no power to bind her successors to a usurped authority, that her crown being wholly independent, she would own no sovereign but Jesus Christ, that the pope's usurpation over princes was intolerable, and that she should look upon all her subjects, both spiritual and temporal, as enemies to God and the crown, who from henceforth should aid his pretensions in this kingdom." On tendering the oath of supremacy to the clergy, out of nine thousand four hundred, which was the total number then in the kingdom, there were only fourteen bishops, twelve deans, twelve archdeacons, fifty prebendaries, fifteen heads of colleges, and about eighty of the parochial clergy, who chose rather to quit their preferments than give up their religion. From the above it appears that the religion of some of these divines had undergone a triple change. The vacillancy of the clergy at this period was most glaring. "Strange that a people so resolute should be guilty of so much inconstancy; that the same people on one day assisted at the execution of heretics, should the next not only think them guiltless, but subscribe to their creed." Three of the bishops, a few gentlemen, and all the nuns, went out of the kingdom, but most of the monks returned to a secular course of life.

The vacant sees were left open for a length of time, to see whether any of the old bishops would conform; but as they all positively refused, Dr. Parker was consecrated archbishop of Canterbury, and the rest of the sees were filled up in a short time. Heath, late archbishop of York, was a man of a very generous and humane spirit, and had never burned any one for heresy; he was permitted to retire to his own house in Surrey, where he was honoured with a visit from the queen. Tunstall and Thirlby lived with archbishop Parker at Lambeth with as much freedom as if the palace had been their own.

Soon after the vacancies in the church were all filled up the queen issued commissions for a general visitation, and published a body of injunctions commanding her "loving subjects obediently to receive, and truly to observe and keep them according to their offices, degrees, and states; and the penalties for disobeying them were suspension, deprivation, sequestration of the fruits and benefices, excommunication, and such other corrections as to those who have ecclesiastical jurisdiction under her majesty should seem meet." This was the first high commission that was issued, and gave rise to much unpleasant reflection, founded upon the authorizing lay-visitors to proceed by ecclesiastical censures, especially as the commissioners imposed fines and imprisonments, in many cases, far beyond what they were authorized to do by the statute.

The commissioners displayed a laudable zeal in demolishing the instruments and utensils of idolatry which they found in the churches. They commanded the prebendaries and archdeacon of London to purge the cathedral of St. Paul's from all its images, idols, and altars, and to provide a decent table for the celebration of the Lord's supper. The populace, who were still smarting under the effects of popery in the former reign, readily lent their assistance in this work of destruction, by pulling down all the roods and crucifixes, which they brought into Smithfield, Cheapside, and Paul's church-yard, together with a number of priests' vestments, and burnt them to ashes. In the heat of their untempered zeal, they broke the painted glass windows, razed out some ancient inscriptions, and spoiled those monuments of the dead that had upon them any ensigns of popery. These violent proceedings were highly disapproved of by the queen. She would neither part with the altar, crucifix, nor lighted candles out of her chapel. She argued that they had a tendency to excite devotion, and would be a means of reconciling the supersitious to the new religion. In the queen's chapel, the gentlemen and the choristers appeared in their surplices, and the priests in their copes; the altar was furnished with rich plate, with gilt candlesticks, with lighted candles, and a massy crucifix of silver in the midst. The service was sung not only with the sound of the organ, but, on the solemn festivals, with the artifi-

cial music of cornets, sackbuts, &c. The ceremonies observed by the knights of the garter, in their adoration towards the altar, which had been abolished by king Edward, and revived by queen Mary, were retained. In short, the service as performed in the queen's chapel, and in some of the cathedrals, was so splendid that foreigners could not distinguish it from the Roman, except that it was performed in English. Through these means many of the popish laity were allured into conformity, and attended the service at the church regularly nine or ten years, until the pope, having lost all hope of an accommodation, forbid them, by excommunicating the queen, and laying the whole kingdom under an interdict.

Some of the injunctions published by the queen were not well received by the Reformers, especially by those who had returned from abroad. No objections were made to the oath of supremacy, nor to the declaration of faith; but to the habits, and some parts of the ceremonies enjoined under the article of ministerial uniformity, they were very unwilling to conform. To restrain the effects which strongly excited feelings were calculated to produce, no minister was allowed to preach without a licence from his ordinary. The consequence was that there was very little preaching throughout the country. The bishop of Bangor had but two preachers in all his diocese. No books were allowed to be printed without a licence.

To avoid giving offence to the semi-catholic

party, it was strictly enjoined that no altar should be taken down but with the consent of the minister and churchwardens,—that communion-tables should be made for every church, and on sacrament days should be set in the chancel, and at other times where the altar stood. The sacramental bread was to be made round and plain, a little larger than the cakes made for the mass. In the last session of parliament an act was passed, empowering her majesty to take possession of all the castles, manors, lands, and tene-ments she pleased belonging to the vacant sees ; and to give in exchange their value in inappropriate parsonages, tithes, &c. Several of the sees had been vacated by the popish bishops, and the queen issued a commission to have those vacant bishop-rics surveyed, and the returns sent into the ex-chequer. By another commission, the lord-treasurer and three others were to examine which of the lands thus returned were proper to be an-nexed to the crown. The queen's commands were promptly executed; the church lands were entered in the exchequer at the old rents, without any consideration of the fines, and the com-pensation was to be made out of poor estates rated at their full value. The bishops were aware how the church would be impoverished by this measure, and petitioned the queen not to proceed with it, but to let the property be transferred to the new sees erected by king Henry VIII. The queen was memorialized on the subject by Dr. Cox,

bishop of Ely, who had been preceptor to king Edward. In this memorial, he reminded the queen that she had been educated in the best religious principles,—and urged her by the motives of conscience, the fear of God, and the certainty of a future state, under the influence of which she professed always to act, not to proceed with the projected measure, which would prove so injurious to the interest of the church. But, though some of the doctor's reasons were unanswerable, the queen was not to be moved from her purpose; for neither her own generosity nor her love to the church furnished motives sufficiently strong to induce her to relinquish what the act allowed.

The form of public worship being now settled, and the vacant sees supplied with bishops, the next difficulty which the government had to surmount, was in supplying with parochial clergy the places vacated by the recusants, a very few of those who had returned from exile being willing to conform to the proposed terms. Such a circumstance was greatly to be regretted, as there was no dispute among them on any point of doctrine, but merely about the habits and ceremonies; and had these been left indifferent, it would have prevented the unhappy division which took place. Many churches were left without a minister; but, for a temporary supply, several unlearned mechanics were ordained and put into livings, some of whom were neither profitable to the people nor a credit to the ministerial character.

Such was the precarious state of the church at that time, that if some of the puritans had not complied for the present, in hope of seeing some of the objectionable parts removed, in all probability the whole affairs of the church would have gone back into the hands of the papists. Many of the bishops were aware of the injury the church had sustained by putting unqualified men into the ministry, as appears from a mandate of archbishop Parker to the bishop of London and the suffragans of his province, forbidding them to ordain any more unqualified persons.

Two unsuccessful efforts were made about this time to bring the queen over to the church of Rome. The first attempt was made by Heath, late archbishop, and four other popish bishops, who sent an address to the queen, exhorting her to return to the bosom of the true church. To this address the queen returned a prompt and decisive reply. This failure was followed by a more formidable attempt made by Pius IV., the reigning pontiff. His holiness, having found that violent measures were not likely to succeed, ventured to try the effect of a little subtilty. He wrote a flattering letter to Elizabeth, informing her that he had given instructions to his nuncio to confirm the English liturgy,—to allow the communion in both kinds,—and to reverse the sentence against her mother's marriage, on condition that she would return to the obedience due to the holy see. But Elizabeth was proof against the policy

of the pope, being as proud of the supremacy as was the late king her father. The queen condescended to receive the pope's letter, but she positively prohibited the nuncio from setting his foot in England, to the no small mortification of the haughty pontiff. The emperor and other Roman catholic princes interceded with the queen to allow her catholic subjects to keep up a separate communion ; but her majesty had not yet forgotten the fires that had consumed so many protestants in different parts of the kingdom during the late reign ; and she had too much regard for the peace and safety of her subjects to put any more power into the hands of the papists.

The queen sent a letter to the archbishop of Canterbury, as one of the ecclesiastical commissioners, to review the calendar and order of lessons to be read throughout the year. Before this time the minister was at liberty to change any of the chapters appointed in the calendar for others which he thought would be more edifying. It is much to be lamented that this liberty was not continued, limited only by the canon of scripture, as it would have removed one great objection from the puritans, that of reading the apochryphal lessons. Though this liberty was not allowed, the prohibition not having been legally reversed, archbishop Abbot was of opinion that it was in force in his time, and that the clergy ought to have been indulged with that privilege during the course of that reign. But neither the queen nor

any of her bishops would permit the least deviation from the act of uniformity.

The archbishop, on visiting his diocese, found it in a most lamentable state, the greater part of the clergy being either unlearned mechanics, or popish priests in disguise. He immediately laid the case before the queen, but, instead of applying proper means for removing the evils, she directed his grace to draw up a form of subscription to be signed by all ecclesiastics, acknowledging "that the restoring the supremacy to the crown, and the abolishing all foreign power, as well as the administration of the sacraments according to the book of Common Prayer and the queen's injunctions, is agreeable to the word of God and the practice of the primitive church." At the same time an admonition was published, and put up in all the churches, forbidding "all clergymen under the degree of masters of arts to preach or expound the scriptures, or to innovate or alter any thing, or to use any other rite but only what is set forth by authority;" viz., they were only to read the homilies.

But the want of protestants duly qualified for the ministry, who had no scruples about the act of uniformity, was so great that it was found impossible to comply with the admonition. In some parishes they had neither a sermon preached nor a homily read for many months, and it was with difficulty a person could be found who could either administer baptism or bury the dead. As most

of the professors and tutors at the universities had for the last six or seven years been of the popish religion, nearly all the youths had been trained up in the same principles, so that it was long before the church could be supplied with ministers properly educated. Indeed the Reformation scarcely made any progress for some time, which may in part be accounted for on the ground of the queen's strong attachment to some of the popish rites. It was with the greatest difficulty she was prevailed upon to part with the images out of her chapel, and with the crucifix she never would part. She was very much opposed to the marriage of the clergy, and expressed her regret that she had raised any married men to bishoprics ; and, had it not been for the courage and promptitude of Cecil, it is probable she would have prohibited the marriage of all ecclesiastics.

The archbishop was obliged to consent to an injunction "that no head or any member of any college or cathedral should bring a wife, or any other woman, into the precincts of it, to abide in the same, on pain of forfeiture of all ecclesiastical preferment." The archbishop wrote to the secretary on the subject, informing him, "that all the bishops were very much dissatisfied with the queen,—that he repented having accepted the station he held,—that the reception he met with from her majesty the day before had quite indisposed him for all other business, and he could only mourn to God in the bitterness of his soul ; but if she went

on to force the clergy to any incompliance, they must obey God rather than men, and that many of them had conscience and courage enough to sacrifice their lives in defence of religion."

The pope, being apprised of the cautious manner in which the queen proceeded against popery, made another effort to bring her over to his church. He sent a nuncio, inviting her to appoint some of her bishops or ambassadors to attend the council of Trent. But Elizabeth would not allow the nuncio to land in England. The pope next employed the kings of Portugal, France, and Spain, to prevail on her to send a deputation to the council. They reminded her how much safer it would be for her to rely upon the united judgment of such a solemn assembly, than to depend upon the opinions of a few private persons. The queen replied that she greatly desired a general council, but would send no representatives to Trent,—that the pope's authority had been abolished in England by act of parliament, consequently she would have no further correspondence with that see,—that it was not the pope's but the emperor's privilege to call a council, and that the bishop of Rome had no more authority there than any other bishop.

The second parliament called by Elizabeth was opened on the 12th of January, 1562. The first act they passed was one to confirm the act of supremacy. A clause was introduced into this act, declaring "that no man living in the queen's dominions should from thenceforth, by word or

writing, or any other open deed, endeavour to maintain the power of the bishop of Rome, as heretofore claimed and usurped in this realm,—and, for the better discovery of all such persons as were inclined to popery, it was enacted that none should be admitted into holy orders, to any degree in the universities, or to any of the inns of court, to practise as an attorney, to hold any office in Westminster-hall, or any other court, or to serve in parliament, until he had taken the oath of supremacy." But the queen made the application of this act as palatable as possible, by an order to the bishops not to tender the oath of supremacy but in case of necessity; and never to press it a second time without special direction from the archbishop; so that none of the popish clergy suffered any thing by its operation, except Bonner and a few of his party.

The convocation was opened at St. Paul's, by a licence from the queen, the day after the meeting of parliament. Mr. Day, provost of Eton, preached the sermon, and Alexander Nowell, dean of St. Paul's, was chosen prolocutor. The first subject that engaged their attention was, to review the doctrine and discipline of the church. They began with the doctrine, and reduced the forty-two articles, passed in the time of Edward VI., to thirty-nine, the number as they now stand. On the subject of reading lessons out of the apocryphal books, it was declared that the lessons read out of those books were not for the confirma-

tion of doctrine, but for the instruction of the people.

It has often been warmly disputed, whether the first clause of the twentieth article,—“the church has power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in controversies of faith,”—was a part of the article that passed the synod, since it certainly is not in the original copy that was subscribed by the two houses, as may now be seen in the library of Bennett College. The most probable conjecture is, that the registrar, who transcribed the articles into the convocation book, with the names of them that subscribed, might have had instructions from his superiors to insert it, so that it might have appeared in the records, though not in the original draught. Several papers were presented to the convocation, proposing a further reformation in the church. One of these papers, which was signed by thirty-three members of the lower house, proposed that all holydays, except Sundays, and the feasts relating to Christ, should be abrogated, —that in reading the Common Prayer the minister should turn his face to the people,—that the cross in baptism should be omitted, as tending to superstition,—that the order for kneeling at the sacrament should be left to the discretion of the minister, to accommodate those who, through age or infirmity, were unable to kneel,—that no minister should perform divine worship, or administer the sacrament, but in a surplice, without any other habit of distinction or order,—and

that the use of organs in the church should be omitted.

These propositions were warmly debated in the lower house, and when put to the vote there were forty-three in favour of the propositions, and thirty-three against them ; but, when the proxies were counted, the scale was turned, and it was carried by a majority of one that there should be no alteration in the rites and ceremonies then established. Several other papers were presented by the puritan part of the convocation, in favour of a further reformation in the discipline and government of the church ; but the high church party would abate nothing to meet the conscientious scruples of their pious brethren, though much had been yielded to the Roman catholics. On the 10th of April the convocation was prorogued, which, properly speaking, closed the Reformation of the church of England.

The operation of the act of uniformity proved in many instances fatal to the best interests of religion. None of those who refused to wear the habits were put into any of the churches, though numbers were closed for want of ministers. Among others who suffered on that account was the venerable Coverdale, formerly bishop of Exeter, who, with Tyndal and Rogers, first translated the Bible into English after Wickliffe. Soon after the accession of queen Mary, Coverdale was cast into prison, and only escaped the flames through the intercession of the king of Denmark, who re-

quested that he might be sent over into that country. On the death of Mary he returned to England, and assisted at the consecration of Parker, queen Elizabeth's first archbishop of Canterbury; but, because he could not conform to the habits and ceremonies, he was suffered to sink into the depths of poverty. At length, Grindal, bishop of London, gave him the small living of St. Magnus, at the foot of London bridge, where he preached for about two years, but, not conforming to what the act required, he was compelled to relinquish it a little before his death, in the eighty-first year of his age.

The prudent counsels of secretary Cecil, the earl of Leicester, who was a great favourite with the queen, had greatly abated her zeal for the act of uniformity. But the cooling of the queen's zeal tended to rekindle that of the archbishop, who wrote to the secretary saying,—that if the queen did not support him to enforce the injunctions he should only be laughed at for what he had done, and would no more strive against the stream. From subsequent proceedings, it is evident that this appeal to the court was not made in vain; for it was soon followed by a violent persecution against the puritan clergy.

Among the first victims of this fiery zeal were Sampson, dean of Christ Church, and Humphreys, president of Magdalen College, Oxford. They were both distinguished for their piety, learning, and zeal for the Reformation. When brought

before the commissioners, the archbishop tried by various arguments to remove their scruples, but they were inflexible. They were frequently brought before the commissioners, who assailed them with all the cutting sarcasm they could invent. But these men were not to be driven from their conscientious scruples by low ribaldry, which was the chief argument they had to answer ; they resolved at length to address a supplicatory letter to the ecclesiastical commissioners. In this letter they call God to witness how they lament seeing ministers of the gospel, all holding the same faith, quarrelling about a cap and surplice. In support of their sentiments, they refer to St. Austin, Socrates, and Theodoret, to show that in their times there was a variety of rites and observances, which did not at all interrupt their peace and unity. They beseech the bishops, "if there be any fellowship in Christ," that they would follow the direction of St. Paul about things in their own nature indifferent, "that every one should be fully persuaded in his own mind." "Conscience," say they, "is a tender thing, and all men cannot look upon the same things as indifferent ; if, therefore, you see these habits in that light, we do not condemn you on that account, nor ought we to be persecuted by you because they appear different to us." Having appealed to antiquity, to the practice of other reformed churches, and to the consciences of the bishops, they conclude thus,— "Wherefore we most humbly pray that what is

the care and pleasure of papists, and for which you yourselves have no great value, and which we refuse not from any contempt of authority, but from an aversion to the common enemy, may not be our snare nor our crime."

Some of the reasons they assigned for not wearing the habits were,—1. That apparel ought to be worn by the church as meat ought to be eaten ; but, according to St. Paul, meat offered to idols ought not to be eaten ; therefore popish apparel ought not to be worn in the worship of protestants. 2. We ought not to give offence in matters of mere indifference ; therefore the bishops who are of this opinion ought not to enforce the habits. 3. Popish garments have many superstitious and mystical significations, for which purpose they are consecrated by the papists ; consequently we ought either to consecrate them or lay them wholly aside. 4. Our ministrations are supposed by some not to be valid, or acceptable to God, unless performed in popish apparel ; this being a prevailing opinion, we apprehend it highly necessary to undeceive the people. 5. Things indifferent ought not to be made necessary, because they then change their nature, and we lose our Christian liberty. 6. If we are bound to wear popish apparel when commanded, we may be obliged to have shaven crowns, and to make use of oil, spittle, cream, and all the rest of the papistical additions to the ordinances of Christ.

The commissioners were much divided in opinion

about the extent of punishment to be inflicted, several of them wishing for a compromise, but the archbishop would abate nothing from an implicit conformity to the habits with which they declared they could not in conscience comply. Upon this they were both deprived of their livings, and cast into prison as a terror to others. After the lapse of a few months, Sampson, through the intercession of the secretary, was released from prison, and allowed to preach in public, but was never restored to any church benefice. Humphreys had more friends at court, who not only obtained for him a toleration, but a few years after, when his scruples were become more flexible, he was promoted to the deanery of Winchester.

The university at Cambridge was not less violently agitated by the controversy about the habits. Several of the heads of houses wrote to the secretary, who was their chancellor, praying him to intercede for them with her majesty, that they might not be compelled to conform to a popish ceremony, which for conscience' sake they had laid aside. Their appeal to the secretary was followed by the most unsatisfactory reply. He admonished them that, as they regarded the honour of God, the favour of the queen, and his own good will, they would enforce the use of the habits in all the colleges. After this they made application to the court, which gave such offence to those that were of the high commission, that they had to sue for peace by sending letters of submission. But, though a

peace was patched up on those terms, the puritans found a sanctuary in this university for many years. At length the members of the high commission presented a complaint to the privy council, stating that, notwithstanding the queen's injunctions, the differences in the church were still kept up by the printing and publishing of seditious libels. On the above statement they obtained a decree of the star-chamber to restrain the liberty of the press, and to prevent the printing and selling all books against the queen's injunctions, ordinances, or letters patent,—also granting authority to the wardens of the stationers' company to search all suspected places for such books, and to bring the offenders before the ecclesiastical commissioners.

The archbishop, with the advice of some of the most learned in the civil law, summoned the whole body of incumbents and curates, within the city of London, to appear before him and some of the other commissioners at Lambeth. On the day appointed for the London clergy to appear, the archbishop desired Cecil, and some other members of the privy council, to give countenance to their proceedings by their presence, but they all declined taking any part in such an unpleasant business. When the ministers appeared in court, Mr. Cole, a clergyman, being placed by the side of the commissioners in priestly apparel, the bishop's chancellor from the bench addressed them thus: "My masters, and ye ministers of London, the

council's pleasure is, that strictly ye keep the unity of apparel, like this man who stands here canonically habited, with a square cap, a scholar's gown, priest like, a tippet, and in the church a linen surplice. Ye that will subscribe write, *volo*; those that will not subscribe write, *nolo*; be brief, make no words." After much persuasion, and many threatenings, sixty-one subscribed, and thirty-seven absolutely refused, upon which, notwithstanding their pathetic pleadings on behalf of their families, they were all immediately suspended from the ministry, with an assurance that if they did not conform within three months, they were to be deprived. The archbishop acknowledged that those who would not subscribe were some of the best preachers; but, said he, "I do not doubt but when the clergy have felt the smart of poverty they will comply, for the wood as yet is but green."

By these rigid means the puritans were put to the severest trial, being unwilling to separate from a church which held the faith and doctrines of the gospel, though they conceived the ordinances were defiled by popish superstition. Coverdale, Fox, and a number of the most judicious among them, were for continuing in communion with the church, and preaching as they had opportunity, where the habits could be dispensed with; but the great majority were for a final separation, on which they passed the following resolution:—"That it was their duty in their present circumstances to break

off from the public churches, and to assemble as they had opportunity in private houses, or elsewhere, to worship God in a manner that might not offend against their consciences."

The queen, being informed that the puritans had commenced holding separate meetings, sent an order to the high commissioners to use prompt measures for compelling the people to attend their parish churches. For the accomplishment of their object, they were to threaten those who attended any conventicle, or violated any of the laws of the church; that for the first offence they should be deprived of their freedom of the city of London, and what further punishment the queen might think proper to inflict. As there was no law to disfranchise a man for not going to church, this was such a stretch of the royal prerogative as sufficiently to prove that Elizabeth was the true daughter of Henry VIII. To assist the commissioners in carrying the queen's commands into effect, there were appointed in every parish four or eight censors, spies, or jurats, to take cognizance of all offenders. They were enjoined, under oath, to pay particular attention to the conformity both of the clergy and the parishioners, and to give in their reports when required. Through the vigilance of these censors, many of the puritans were committed to prison, and a number of churches in London were shut up for want of ministers, to the great grief of all good men, and the inexpressible joy of the papists. Grindal,

bishop of London, who was decidedly opposed to such violent proceedings, interceded with the secretary on behalf of the non-conformists, and he so far prevailed with the court that an order was sent to release those that were in prison.

The archbishop, however, still bent upon suppressing the puritans, called in all licences, and required all the preachers to take out new ones. This was intended to bear with special force on those who were neither incumbents nor curates of parishes, but lecturers, or occasional preachers. All parsons and curates were forbidden to allow any lecturer to preach in their churches in virtue of their old licences, and all to whom the archbishop granted new ones were pledged neither to disturb nor vary from the established order of the church. Many of the puritans, who could not comply with the requisitions on which the new licences were granted, kept their old ones, and made the best use of them they could.

There was yet one door of entrance into the ministry over which the archbishop had no control, and of this the puritans availed themselves. Pope Alexander VI. had granted to the university of Cambridge the privilege of licensing twelve ministers annually to preach in any part of England, without obtaining a licence from any of the bishops. The archbishop wrote to secretary Cecil, who was chancellor of the university, to suppress this practice. The reasons he assigned were,—“that the present licences varied from the original bull

as they were given out by the vice-chancellor, whereas they ought only to be in the name of the chancellor,—that it was unreasonable to give licences for life, whereas they ought only to be during our pleasure, or as long as they behave well." But that clause was the most galling to the archbishop which authorized them to preach without a licence from any of the bishops. The vice-chancellor was called up to town, to defend the privilege of the university, which he did to the perfect satisfaction of all concerned, except the archbishop, who was so dissatisfied that he declared he would not admit any of their licences in his diocese without being signed by the chancellor himself. But the resentment of his grace was disregarded by the university; for they retained their privilege, and exercised it greatly to the relief of the puritans.

The violent measures pursued by the high ecclesiastical commissioners were near proving fatal to peace of the nation. The feeling in favour of the puritans was becoming very general among the sober and religious part of the population. On every side the people were perishing for the bread of life. Numbers of churches were shut up for want of ministers, whilst many of the most learned, pious, and zealous divines in the land were silenced,—some of them were shut up in prison, and their families reduced to beggary, for no other crime but because they refused to wear a surplice. On Palm-Sunday six hundred persons came to one

of the churches in London to receive the sacrament, but the doors were shut, there being no minister to officiate. The cries of the people at length reached the ears of the court, and the secretary wrote to the archbishop to release the prisoners, and supply the churches; but his grace would rather the people should be without both sermons and sacraments than have them without the surplice and cap.

Matters were carried with such a high hand by the high church party that the breach daily became wider, and the passions of the contending parties were like fire burning under ground, which if permitted to break forth might prove destructive to both church and state. The writers on this period have each endeavoured to exonerate the party whose cause they have espoused by casting all the blame on their opponents. The conformists charged the nonconformists with disobedience to the queen, obstinacy, perverseness, and with disturbing the peace of the church about the non-essentials of religion. On the other hand, the nonconformists represent it as a most unjust and cruel act to banish godly ministers from the church for what their opponents themselves admit to be matters of mere indifference, but to which they could not conscientiously conform. The nonconformists never refused to take the oath of supremacy, and declared themselves as dutiful subjects, and as willing to obey the queen in all lawful things as were the bishops themselves; and

wherein they could not with a good conscience obey, they would patiently suffer her displeasure.

The controversy, which at the first was confined chiefly to the habits and a few ceremonies, soon began to assume a more formidable aspect, and strong objections were now raised against several other things. The puritans objected to the bishops affecting to be thought a superior order, and claiming the sole right of ordination and ecclesiastical discipline,—to their having temporal dignities and secular employments annexed to their office, as tending to exalt them too much above their brethren, and as not being consonant with the character of ministers of Christ. They objected to the titles and offices of archdeacons, deans, chapters, and other officials belonging to cathedrals, as having no foundation in scripture. They complained of the exorbitant power of the bishops and their chancellors in the spiritual courts, as being derived from the canon law of the pope, and not from the word of God, or the statute law of the land,—that this power was unduly exercised, in fining, imprisoning, depriving, and putting men to excessive expenses for the most trivial things. They lamented the lax discipline of the church, through which the people of profane lives could find easy access to the Lord's table. They insisted that a power ought to be lodged somewhere to inquire into the character and conduct of such as wished to be admitted to the communion. They did not object to a form of prayer, provided

the liberty was allowed to use extemporary prayer before and after sermon. But they did object to some things in the public liturgy, such as the Lord's prayer,—the interruption of the prayers by the frequent responses of the people, which is not practised in any other protestant church in the world,—and especially the cathedral mode of worship,—the singing of the prayers, and chanting of the psalms, which the ecclesiastical commissioners advised to be laid aside in the reign of Edward VI. They objected to that passage in the marriage ceremony, "With my body I thee worship,"—also, in the office of burial, "In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life," being pronounced over the worst of characters. They were not willing to conform to certain rites and ceremonies enjoined by the rubric, such as the sign of the cross in baptism, it being no part of the institution as recorded in scripture,—the use of godfathers and godmothers, to the exclusion of parents for being sureties for the education of their own children. They considered it repugnant to the laws of God and nature to release the parents from the duty of giving Christian instruction to their own child, and enjoin it upon a stranger. They also objected to the custom of confirming children as soon as they could repeat the Lord's prayer and catechism, which might be done by those not more than five or six years old, and thereby entitle them to receive the sacrament without any other qualification. They protested

against the injunction of kneeling at the sacrament of the Lord's supper, and of bowing at the name of Jesus, as the custom was founded upon a false interpretation of that passage, "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow;" as external reverence was required to that name rather than to the person of our blessed Saviour, under the titles of Lord, Saviour, Christ, Emmanuel, &c. They maintained that all the names of God and Christ were to be equally revered, and that it was an outrage on reason to bow the knee, or uncover the head, only at the name of Jesus. They objected also to the use of the ring in marriage, as being derived from the papists, who make marriage a sacrament, and the ring a sacred symbol. They were also opposed to the forbidding of marriage at certain seasons of the year, and then licensing it for money.

Though it does not appear that there was any difference between the conformists and non-conformists on any point of doctrine, yet the above, with many other things of minor importance to which they objected, were quite sufficient to lay the foundation of that final separation which took place from this time.—On taking a cursory view of the state of the church at this period, we cannot but regret that such pertinacity on the one part should have been met with such unyielding opposition on the other, about what both parties professed to consider as non-essentials. This is the more to be lamented, as there was a vigilant

enemy in the field, watching their movements with the most marked attention, in order to take advantage of their divided state, and accomplish the overthrow of both. About this time (1568) was published a folio edition of the Bible, called the "Bishop's Bible," with a preface by Parker. This was merely a revised and corrected edition of Cranmer's translation, but was designed to supersede the use of the Geneva translation, the explanatory notes of which were considered very objectionable. The "Bishop's Bible" was read in the churches till the last translation was made in the reign of king James I.

A scheme of the old doctor at Rome, Pius V., was now divulged, which greatly agitated all the protestants of Europe. By means of his active agents, the Jesuits, he engaged most of the popish princes to enter into a league to extirpate protestantism out of the world. The powers engaged to accomplish this pious purpose were the pope, the emperor of Germany, the kings of France, Spain, and Portugal, the duke of Savoy, &c., &c. Their first object was to dethrone all protestant kings and potentates by force of arms, and then to fill the vacant thrones with catholics. The Jesuits were not inactive in England, but circulated predictions that the end of the queen's reign was just at hand, and thus prepared the way for what followed. The pope commenced operations by publishing his bull to excommunicate the queen of England, lay the kingdom under an interdict, and

absolve her subjects from their allegiance. That protestants in every place, and at every period of time, may know how to appreciate the friendly professions of the infallible, unchanged, and unchangeable church of Rome, we here subjoin a literal translation of the latter part of this memorable bull, as it emanated from that haughty pontiff:—“ Being, therefore, strengthened with his authority who hath pleased to set us in this supreme throne of justice, though unfit for so great a burden, we, by the fulness of our apostolical power, do declare the aforesaid Elizabeth a *heretic*, and a maintainer of *heretics*, and all who take her part in the things aforesaid, [that is, in using wicked rites and institutions according to Calvin’s prescriptions, and commanding them to be observed by her subjects, and abolishing the sacrifice of the mass, prayers, alms, difference of meats, single life, and catholic rites, and compelling many to forswear and abjure the authority and obedience due to the bishop of Rome, &c.,] to have incurred the sentence of anathema, and to be cut off from the unity of Christ’s body. And, moreover, that she is deprived of the pretended right of her said kingdom, and also from all rule, dignity, and pre-eminence whatsoever. And also that her nobility, subjects, and the people of the said realm, and all others who have sworn unto her by any kind of oath, are absolved for ever from such oath, and from all duty of empire, fidelity, and obedience, inasmuch as we do absolve them by

these presents, and deprive the said Elizabeth of the pretended right of kingdom, and of all other things aforesaid. And we do command and forbid all and each of the nobility, subjects, people, and others aforesaid, that they presume not to obey her admonitions, commands, or laws. Whosoever shall act otherwise, we do enwrap them in the like curse, &c. Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, in the year of the Incarnation of our Lord 1569, the fifth of the calends of March, and of our papacy the fifth."

The publishing of this bull was the signal for the papists, who now openly separated from the church. In some parts of Lancashire the Common Prayer-Book was laid aside, churches were shut up, and the mass was celebrated openly. Two of the colleges of Oxford, namely, New College and Corpus Christi, were so full of papists that their visiter, the bishop of Winchester, was compelled to break open the gates of the college, and employ the ecclesiastical commission to reduce them to order. The inns of court and several other places of public resort were crowded with papists, impatiently waiting the death of the queen, which event they expected would soon follow the curse pronounced by the pope, and the accession to the throne of the presumptive heir, Mary, queen of Scotland. A general commotion was excited among the papists throughout the kingdom, and an attempt was made to unite their forces. The earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland broke

out into open rebellion with an army of four thousand men; their professed object was to restore the popish religion, and deliver the queen of Scots. They took the city of Durham, and in every church they entered they destroyed the Bible and Common Prayer-Book, and ordered the celebration of mass. The prompt measures adopted by the queen soon put an end to this insurrection. She sent the duke of Suffolk with an army into the north, but the rebels retired without waiting his arrival. The earl of Northumberland was taken in Scotland, and executed at York; but the earl of Westmoreland escaped into Flanders, where he died in great poverty. An attempt was made by Throgmorton, Brook, and Redman, to raise an insurrection in Norfolk, for which they and several of their accomplices suffered death. Hall, a catholic priest, hired one John Summervil to murder the queen, for which he was executed. Edmund Champion, a priest, and William Parry were both executed for attempting to murder the queen. Thomas Howard, and several other popish traitors, were executed in different places, being urged on by the pope's agents, and in virtue of the bull.

The parliament which sat this year (1569) passed a bill making it high treason to declare the queen to be a heretic, schismatic, tyrant, or usurper; to publish or put in force the pope's bulls to receive absolution in virtue of the same, or to be reconciled to the church of Rome. The concealing

or not discovering offenders against this act was misprision of treason. A protestation was at the same time drawn up, to be made by all reputed papists, acknowledging the lawful right of the queen, notwithstanding any sentence of the pope to the contrary. A similar protestation was to be made by the nonconformists, though it was clear that the queen had not any more loyal and faithful subjects in her realm, nor any so little disposed to favour the pope.

Such was the conduct of the Roman catholics, that had the queen studied the real interest of the reformed church, and the peace of the realm, she would have conceded something to the puritan party, for the sake of drawing a closer union among her protestant subjects; but instead of this the edge of those laws, that were made against popish recusants, was turned against the protestant nonconformists, which, like all other coercive measures, instead of bringing them into the church, drove them further from it. Many of the most pious and able ministers, finding that the doors of the church were closed against them because they refused to conform to the habits, served her majesty as chaplains both in the army and navy.

A long conference was held about this time by the friends of the nonconforming party on the subject of a final separation from the established church, when the following resolution was passed:—
“ That, under existing circumstances, it was their duty to break off from the public churches, and to

assemble as they had opportunity, in private houses or elsewhere, to worship God in a manner that would not offend their consciences." This was the crisis from which may be dated their final separation from the church of England, and which forms a new era in the ecclesiastical history of the country. A little yielding on each side might at one time have prevented such a catastrophe. But though both parties professed that the things about which they contended were non-essentials, yet they were each as tenacious of their own opinion as if their salvation had been suspended upon it; and the party that had the power used it with severity to establish their own predilection.

Notwithstanding the queen's order, the puritans continued their private meetings, and the rigid manner in which the penal laws were executed against them brought plenty of employment to the civilians. Numbers were cited into the spiritual courts, and after a long attendance, and heavy charges, were suspended or deprived. The pur-sivant, or messenger of the court, was paid by the mile, which, together with the other fees, made the expenses enormous. If a prisoner was dismissed, he was almost ruined with the costs, and was bound in a recognizance to appear again whenever the court should require him. The crowded state of the prisons in London, and the distress occasioned by such violent proceedings, induced the bishop of London to solicit the secretary of state on their behalf, and he at last succeeded in

obtaining their release. Several lords of the council were of opinion that had lenient measures been employed, many more would have been brought to conform than were by treating them with such severity.

A considerable commotion was excited at Cambridge by the lectures of Mr. Cartwright, fellow of Trinity College. Cartwright was held in high estimation in the university as a man of undaunted courage, a popular preacher, and a profound scholar, which brought crowds of students to his lectures. What rendered his lectures more popular at this time was, that he dilated largely on the defects in the English hierarchy, particularly the following :—That the names and functions of archbishops and archdeacons ought to be abolished, having no foundation in Scripture; that the offices of bishops and deacons ought to be reduced to the apostolical institution; the bishops to preach the gospel to the people, and the deacons to take care of the poor; that the government of the church ought not to be entrusted with bishops, chancellors, or the officials of archdeacons; but every church ought to be governed by its own minister and presbyters; that bishops should not be created by the civil authority, but chosen fairly by the church. These, with several other propositions extracted from his lectures as delivered at different times, were sent to secretary Cecil, as chancellor of the university, who directed the vice-chancellor to silence the author, or compel him to

recant. The sentiments advanced by Cartwright were opposed by Dr. Whitgift, in a course of sermons preached at the university. Cartwright challenged the doctor to a public disputation, but he declined accepting it, unless, as he pleaded, he could first obtain permission of the queen.

Cartwright's case excited considerable interest in the university, and the general opinion was that, not having touched upon the controversy about the habits, he could have no intention to create discord. In confirmation of this opinion, fifteen of the most influential persons in the university affixed their names to a memorial sent to the secretary of state, affirming that though he had advanced certain propositions with regard to the ministry, yet he did it with all possible caution and modesty. There were other letters sent in his favour, but the court determined to make an example of him in order to deter others. The secretary, as chancellor, refused to interfere, and he was left to the mercy of his enemies, who first denied him his degree as doctor in divinity, then prohibited his reading public lectures, and afterwards deprived him of his fellowship, and expelled him the university.

But this controversy was not confined to Cambridge; for when the parliament met, in 1572, Mr. Strickland, a very respectable member of the house of commons, introduced a bill for a further reformation in the church. He asserted that many of the popish superstitions which remained

in the Book of Common Prayer might be altered without any detriment to religion. Mr. Strickland was replied to by the treasurer of the queen's household, who said, "that all matters of ceremonies were to be referred to the queen, and for them to meddle with the royal prerogative was not convenient." Mr. Strickland's motion so offended her majesty, that she summoned him to appear before the council, and deprived him of his seat in parliament. Her majesty's conduct towards Strickland produced an alarming sensation among the members of parliament, who, so far from being intimidated by such treatment of an honourable member, expressed their views with such freedom of speech that the queen was induced to restore him to his seat in the house.

No sooner had Mr. Strickland regained his seat than he moved that a confession of faith should be published and confirmed by parliament, as it was in other protestant countries, and that a committee should be appointed to confer with the bishops on this subject. Accordingly, a committee was appointed, who drew up certain articles similar to those which passed the convocation in 1562, omitting those homilies, the consecration of bishops, and other things that related to the hierarchy. When the committee produced their articles, the archbishop inquired why the other articles were not inserted. Mr. Wentworth replied, because they had not yet examined how far they were agreeable to the word of God, having confined

themselves to doctrines. The archbishop replied, "Surely in these things you will refer wholly to the bishops." To which Mr. Wentworth warmly replied, "No, by the faith I bear to God, we will pass nothing before we understand what it is; for that were to make you popes, which the house of commons is not willing to do."

At length the articles relating to discipline were waved, and an act passed enjoining that all ecclesiastics under the degree of bishop, who had been ordained by a form different from the one set forth in king Edward's time and now in use, should, before the bishop of the diocese, declare their assent to all the articles of religion concerning the confession of the true faith, and the doctrine of the sacraments. This subscription to the doctrines and the bishop's certificate were to be read with the articles publicly in the church on the Sunday, during the time of divine service, in default of which they incurred the penalty of deprivation, as well as for holding doctrines contrary to the said articles. This act prohibited a deacon from being admitted to a benefice with cure under twenty-three years of age; nor might any administer the sacrament under the age of twenty-four.

From the above act it appears that those articles which relate to the discipline of the church were not designed by parliament to be the terms of admission into orders or to benefices; and, had the queen and the bishops governed themselves by the act, the separation from the church would have

been stifled in its infancy. But the queen was too proud of her prerogative, and the bishops were too servile in their compliances, and consequently many of the most faithful ministers of that day were deprived of their preferments for refusing to subscribe to what the law did not require. Although the queen had forbidden the house of commons to meddle any more with the affairs of the church, yet they addressed her again during the same session, complaining of the want of suitable ministers in the church, and that the protestant religion was in many places sinking into disgrace through the improper conduct of the clergy and their want of ability. They therefore prayed her majesty to take the subject into her gracious consideration, and to redress those grievances before the prorogation of parliament. But the queen dissolved the parliament without paying any attention to the address.

The convocation which sat at the same time with this parliament were so far from attempting to relieve their brethren, by qualifying the article of subscription, that they added rivets to fetters that were galling the minds of the most pious and conscientious of the clergy, by passing several new canons of discipline which were intended to bear against the puritans. The bishops were to call in all their licences for preaching, and grant new ones to those who were best qualified. The chief qualification they insisted upon was subscription, not only to the doctrines of the church enjoined by

parliament, but also to the Book of Common Prayer and the ordinal for consecration of archbishops, bishops, priests, and deacons, as containing nothing contrary to the word of God. They declared further, that those preachers who would not subscribe, or who disturbed men's minds with contrary doctrines, should be excommunicated. These canons were subscribed by most of the bishops of both provinces, but, from some unknown cause, never had the sanction of the broad seal; so that insisting upon the scrupulous to subscribe to them was an unjustifiable stretch of power, which Grindal, archbishop of York, refused to enforce, lest it should involve him in a premunire. The other bishops made not the same objection, but cancelled all the licences of the preachers in their several dioceses, and insisted peremptorily on the above subscription, by which, according to Strype's computation, above one hundred clergymen were deprived in one year for refusing to subscribe. But the commissioners appointed to see the queen's injunctions executed, not only exceeded what the law required, but also the penalty which the law inflicted. Many of these good men were kept in prison for months beyond the time specified by the law, to the loss of their health and the ruin of their families. The cruelties inflicted by the commissioners during this reign, on the pious ministers who refused to subscribe to the injunctions, were little less than those exercised by Bonner towards the Reformers in the days of Mary.

But these severities arose not so much from a persecuting spirit in the commissioners, as from the imperious temper of the queen, who was perpetually urging them on to still severer measures; and such was their abject fear of incurring her displeasure, that they durst not even suggest a more lenient procedure. The above sentiment is confirmed by a speech delivered by lord Burleigh to the commissioners in the star-chamber, in which he was directed by the queen to complain of their tardiness in enforcing her proclamations, as she could not satisfy her conscience without crushing the puritans, whom she thought unworthy of her protection.*

In obedience to the queen's commands, the archbishop cited the chief puritan divines about London to meet him at Lambeth. These divines, not willing to retire from the work of the ministry, offered to subscribe the articles of religion as far as the doctrines and sacraments only were concerned, and the book of Common Prayer, as far as it tended to edification; at the same time earnestly requesting that each party might be left in the use of the apparel to their own discretion. Reasonable as this request was, the archbishop told them peremptorily that they must either comply with the queen's injunctions or be deprived. The consequence was that a great number of them were deprived for refusing to subscribe. One of those that were then deprived was Robert Brown, do-

* Dr. Warner's Eccl. Hist., vol. ii., p. 442.

mestic chaplain to the duke of Norfolk, who afterwards gave name to that denomination of dissenters called Brownists. The duke undertook to screen his chaplain, but the archbishop soon informed him that there was no place in her majesty's dominions exempt from the jurisdiction of the commissioners, and that if his chaplain did not appear forthwith they must have recourse to other means, as the queen was resolved that her orders and injunctions should not be contemned with impunity.

The commissioners sent letters to all the bishops, exhorting them to command their archdeacons and other officers to exert themselves among the clergy and churchwardens, to discover all the puritans in their respective parishes, in consequence of which great numbers of both laity and clergy were fined, and others imprisoned. The puritan divines, being now denied the liberty both of preaching and printing, challenged their adversaries to a public disputation. This liberty had been allowed in the reigns of Edward and Mary, and also in the beginning of this reign, between the papists and Reformers. This proposition of the puritans was approved of by Sandys, bishop of London, who sent the earl of Leicester a list of the divines whom he thought capable of conducting the controversy on the part of the church; but the queen would not allow her injunctions to be exposed to the freedom of a public dispute.

But instead of a public conference, in which the merits of the case might be fairly discussed,

several of the leading divines among the puritans were brought before the council and examined on certain articles, and, for the answers they gave, were some of them silenced, and others of them sent to Newgate. Among those who were sent to Newgate were Mr. Field, minister of Aldermury, London, and a Mr. Wilcox, who compiled a treatise, "setting forth their chief grievances in one view," under the title of "*An Admonition to Parliament.*" The book was intended to present a model of church discipline,—the manner of electing ministers, their several duties, and their equality in government. It speaks of the corruptions of the hierarchy, and the conduct of the bishops, in such abusive language as modern times can never tolerate. It concludes with a petition to parliament for a reformation in the church.

The book called "*An Admonition,*" was answered by Dr. Whitgift, master of Trinity College, and vice-chancellor of Cambridge, and was revised and corrected by Parker, archbishop of Canterbury, Cooper, bishop of London, and Pern, bishop of Ely; so that in this book, says Strype, may be seen all the arguments for and against the hierarchy drawn to the best advantage. Whitgift's book gave birth to a masterly reply by Mr. Cartwright, whose book was read with admiration by great numbers in the university of Cambridge. Whitgift wrote a reply to Cartwright, for which he received the thanks of the bishops, and the queen rewarded him for his learned labours with the

deanery of Lincoln; whilst Cartwright, to avoid the rigour of the ecclesiastical commissioners, had to retire into banishment. On this Fuller the historian remarks, "If Cartwright had the better of his opponent in wit and learning, Whitgift had more power to back his arguments, and by this he not only kept the field, but gained the victory." We cannot go into the detail of this controversy, but the result was, Whitgift was raised to a bishopric, and Cartwright was persecuted till he became little better than a wandering beggar.

In the year 1571 certain associations of the clergy were formed in the dioceses of London, York, Norwich, Chester, Ely, and Durham, under the title of prophesyings of the clergy. The clergy were divided into associations, and held their meetings once a fortnight under a moderator appointed by the bishop.

At these meetings one was appointed to preach the sermon on a given subject, at which any person might attend; and after the congregation was dismissed the members of the association commenced their exercise, which was founded upon the subject matter of the sermon. These meetings were of great service in exposing the errors of popery, and spreading scriptural knowledge among the people.

Beneficial as these prophesyings were, both to the clergy and laity, they were not approved of by the archbishop, who told the queen that they were no better than seminaries of puritanism,—that

these exercises tended to make the people so inquisitive that they would not submit as they ought to the orders of their superiors. It was further stated, that these associations were more in the diocese of Norwich than any other, as that bishop was most favourable to them, and allowed some of the ministers to officiate without the habits, and to dispute on church discipline. Upon this representation, the queen directed the archbishop to suppress them in every diocese, and to begin with Norwich. The archbishop wrote to Matchet, one of his chaplains in that diocese, requiring him to inform the bishop that the queen willed him to suppress those vain prophesyings, and in her majesty's name immediately to discharge them. This was a painful task imposed on good bishop Parkhurst, who wrote to the archbishop, informing him that the exercises complained of had been and still were of singular benefit both to the clergy and laity, and pleaded hard for their continuance. The bishop stated his case also to the privy council, who, not knowing any thing of the affair, were surprised at the archbishop's order, and encouraged him to continue the prophesyings. The archbishop was not a little mortified at finding his orders countermanded by the privy council, but he gave vent to his feelings by informing the queen, who directed him to command the bishop of Norwich peremptorily to obey the queen's orders upon pain of her majesty's high displeasure. Upon this the good bishop submitted, and these religious exer-

cises were suppressed through the diocese, which was soon followed by their downfall in every other part of the kingdom.

These religious exercises among the clergy produced a happy effect on some of the laity. In the parishes of Balsham, in Cambridgeshire, and Strethall, in Essex, many seriously disposed persons began to meet together on holydays, and at other times after they had done their work for the day, to read the Scriptures, and confirm each other in the Christian faith. An account of these meetings was sent to the high commissioners, who ordered the ministers of the above parishes immediately to suppress them. This was a great grief to those honest people, who declared that their only motive was to promote their own and their families' instruction, the reformation of vice, and a further acquaintance with the word of God. But these religious meetings, not being appointed by public authority, were more objectionable to the archbishop and commissioners than if those poor people had spent their evenings in vice and dissipation.

One of the last public acts in the life of archbishop Parker was visiting the diocese of Winchester, and in particular the Isle of Wight, where he exercised such severities as caused him to be reflected on all over the nation. This island had long been a place of resort for foreign protestants, and seafaring men of all countries; consequently, the habits and ceremonies had not been so strictly

observed as in other places, lest it should affect their commerce. When the archbishop and his retinue arrived, regardless of consequences, he turned out all those ministers who refused the habits, and shut up the churches. Such rigorous measures so roused the inhabitants, that they sent a remonstrance to the earl of Leicester, who made such a representation to the queen of the archbishop's conduct at this visitation that her majesty gave orders for every thing in the churches, in the Isle of Wight, to return to its former state. On the return of the archbishop to court, the queen received him with an unusual degree of coolness, which it is thought greatly affected his mind; for in a few weeks after he sickened and died.

Archbishop Parker was born at Norwich, in the year 1504. He passed through all his several degrees in Bennett College, Cambridge. In the year 1547, in the reign of Edward VI., he married Margaret, daughter of Robert Harlstone, of Mattishall, in the county of Norfolk. When queen Mary came to the throne, he was not only deprived of his livings, in consequence of being married, but, from his known attachment to the protestant cause, he had privately to retire into Norfolk among his friends, with his wife and family. He was often diligently sought for by the popish spies during those bloody times, but providentially escaped being taken, without going out of the kingdom. Upon queen Elizabeth's accession to the throne, he was elected archbishop of Canterbury,

August 1st, 1559. It has been remarked that, during the fifteen years and five months he was metropolitan, he consecrated the bishops of all the other dioceses in the kingdom. It is almost impossible to give a general character of this prelate, as the early and subsequent parts of his life bear no resemblance to each other. In the early part of his public life, he was noted for his good temper, modesty, and humility, which may be fairly inferred from the manner of his refusing the primacy, as he could only be compelled into compliance by the queen's authority. Up to this period, he exhibited a disinterestedness of character that would have done honour to the name of a primitive father of the church; but his subsequent character was marked with all the pomp of vice, brought to bear in the most arbitrary manner in support of the prerogative and supremacy. The queen once told him that he had a supreme ecclesiastical authority in himself, which he exercised by persecuting the puritans beyond the limits of the law. Whilst he was silencing and oppressing the pious puritans, he paid little or no attention to the moral character of the clergy, of which many complaints were made in parliament. He paid more servile obedience to the will of the queen than to the laws of God; for his chief entertainments given to the nobility were on the Lord's day. In the last year of his life came out the great English Bible, commonly called "the Bishop's Bible," in which Parker took a principal part. He left his manuscripts and other

valuable legacies to Bennett College, Cambridge, the place where he had received his education. It is probable that had archbishop Parker not been promoted to so high a station, or had he lived under a sovereign of more moderate principles, he might have adorned his Christian profession by a more holy life, and have descended to his grave with a more honourable character. His mortal remains were interred in Lambeth chapel, where they rested till the end of the civil wars, when Colonel Scott, having purchased that palace, took down the monument and buried the bones in a back-yard, where they remained till some time after the restoration, when they were decently deposited near the place where the monument had stood, and a new one was erected to his memory.

Whilst the queen was persecuting the puritans with the most merciless rigour, though they were the best friends to her government, she manifested a peculiar tenderness towards the papists, who at that time were plotting against her life. The Portuguese ambassador had mass celebrated publicly in his house, in Charter-house yard, to which great numbers of her majesty's subjects resorted, for preventing which the sheriffs and recorder of London were committed to the Fleet by the queen's express command. It was by the queen's connivance that the popish nobility and gentry sent their sons to be instructed in the catholic colleges abroad, in order to provide a succession of missionaries to be sent into England for the pro-

pagation of their faith. The number of students educated in these colleges may be inferred from what is recorded by Saunders, an eminent popish writer, who says, that in this year (1575) there were but thirty old priests in England, but, in the course of a few years after, above three hundred were sent over from the two colleges of Douay and Rome alone.

About this time some Dutch enthusiasts were apprehended in a private house without Aldersgate, where they were assembled for worship. Some of them recanted and were set at liberty; eleven of them, all Dutchmen, were condemned in the consistory of St. Paul's to be burned, nine of whom were banished, and two were burned in Smithfield; but, judging from their opinions, they were more proper subjects for Bedlam than a stake. The Dutch congregation interceded earnestly for their lives; and Fox, the martyrologist, wrote an elegant Latin letter to the queen for a mitigation of their punishment. But Elizabeth had neither the sympathy of nature nor the tenderness of conscience about taking away human life that her brother Edward had; for the writ *de hæretico comburendo*, which had been hung up only *in terrorem* for nearly twenty years, was again taken down and put in execution upon these poor men.

With all the zeal Elizabeth professed for the church, she made no scruple of conscience about appropriating its revenues to her own private use when an

opportunity offered. After the death of Parker, she kept the see of Canterbury vacant nine months, before she translated Grindal to that see. The parliament was now sitting, but nothing more was done in ecclesiastical affairs than passing an act to regulate the paying of the rent of college leases. The convocation was employed at the same time in framing articles on admitting fit persons to the ministry, and establishing good order in the church. It was proposed that marriage might be solemnized at all times of the year ; but the queen, who had determined that no man should share the throne with her, would by no means give her consent to it. This was the last convocation that sat for four years.

Grindal, archbishop of York, succeeded Parker in the chair of Canterbury ; and, in his first metropolitan visitation, he adopted such measures for the regulation of his courts, and enforcing proper ecclesiastical discipline, as showed that he possessed a different kind of zeal from that of his predecessor. Notwithstanding the rigorous measures that had been employed for suppressing the associations of the clergy for spiritual improvement, they were still continued in various places, and sometimes with a degree of irregularity. Grindal was favourable to the prophesyings, and, to remove all cause of complaint, he drew up and published a number of conciliatory regulations, under the following heads :—That the exercises should only be held in such churches as the bishop should appoint,—that

the archdeacon, or some suitable divine approved by the bishop, should preside,—that the bishop should be furnished with a list of such ministers as were thought qualified for taking a part in the exercises, and the parts of scripture to be discussed were to be pointed out by the bishops,—that if a speaker introduced any remarks on state affairs the moderator was to silence him immediately, and report him to the bishop,—that no suspended or deprived minister should be allowed to take any part in these exercises, until he had conformed to the order and discipline of the church,—that no layman should be permitted to take any part in their proceedings.

Though the archbishop had carefully guarded against every reasonable objection that could be raised against these religious exercises, yet the queen was highly incensed against him for the countenance he gave them. She sent for the archbishop, and loudly exclaimed against the prophesying as illegal, and of a dangerous tendency to the state as well as the church, and was determined to have them suppressed. She declared further, that there were too many preachers employed already, and that three or four would be quite sufficient for a county. The archbishop attempted an explanation; but her majesty was too much under the influence of passion to hear his defence, and commanded him peremptorily to put them down. She sent letters to all the bishops in England, commanding them to suppress all

prophesyings in their dioceses, with which most of them complied. But the archbishop, instead of giving his archdeacon directions to execute the queen's commands, wrote a long letter to her majesty, declaring that his conscience would not, for the reasons assigned, suffer him to comply with her commands. In his letter, which may be seen at large in "Middleton's Biographia Evangelica," (vol. ii., pp. 227—236), he honestly informs her majesty that it was necessary there should be preaching in all the churches, and that the exercises which her majesty wished to suppress were not illegal, but very beneficial to the clergy in qualifying them for more extensive usefulness. At the close of his letter, he prays her majesty not to interpose her prerogative in ecclesiastical matters, so as to decide in her own person points of doctrine and discipline without the advice of her bishops; and, if she did interpose in matters of faith which affect the church of Christ, that she would not pronounce so preremitorily as she might do in secular concerns. He assures her that it was from conscience only that he had not executed her commands, and he was very willing to resign his see, if it was her majesty's pleasure. There was such a spirit of Christian honesty in this letter as Elizabeth had not before found in any of her subjects, and which she determined not to bear even from the primate of all England; for, by an order from the star-chamber, he was confined to his house, and sequestered from the discharge of

his archiepiscopal functions for six months. Of the queen's disgraceful conduct to the archbishop, and the injury it did to religion, Sir Robert Cotton says, "In those days there was an emulation between the clergy and the laity, and a strife whether of them should show themselves most affectionate to the gospel. The word of God was precious; prayer and preaching went hand in hand together, until archbishop Grindal's disgrace and Hatfield's hard conceit of prophesying brought the flowing of these good graces to a still water."

Whilst the primate was a prisoner in his own house, a convocation was held at St. Paul's which the archbishop was not allowed to attend. It was moved in the convocation that no business should be transacted, nor any subsidy granted, until the archbishop was restored. This motion was negatived through fear of inflaming the imperious temper of the queen; but they unanimously agreed to petition her majesty to restore the archbishop to his brethren and the church, which was suffering for want of his valuable services. But this address proved ineffectual; for his restoration was peremptorily refused until he made his submission, which he did so far as was consistent with his station and integrity. Not being willing, however, to retract his opinion, or confess his sorrow for the counsel he had offered her majesty, his deprivation was contemplated; but, when the queen's passion had a little subsided, she thought it prudent not to proceed to such an extremity. Thus ended the

prophesyings among the clergy, an institution so well calculated to promote Christian knowledge and piety, at a time when both were at a very low ebb in every part of the nation. The queen had no other reason for putting them down but because they enlightened the minds of the people in scriptural knowledge; and her majesty's opinion was, that knowledge and learning in the laity would endanger their peaceable submission to her absolute will and pleasure.

Complaints now became general throughout England, for want of preachers. In the populous town of Northampton there had not been one for a considerable length of time, although the people had applied to the bishop for one to be sent. In London, one half of the churches were destitute of preaching ministers, and most of the old incumbents were disguised papists. The cause of this scarcity was the rigid severity with which the queen and her high commissioners persecuted such as would not conform to the habits. There were at that time numbers of valuable preachers in the universities ready for the ministry; but there was no encouragement for them to enter, whilst they saw so many pious and zealous ministers unmercifully persecuted about what their opponents themselves admitted were non-essentials.

The various ways in which the queen opposed every thing of a religious character that did not emanate from herself, are almost incredible. On the opening of the session of parliament, in 1580,

the house of commons agreed, that as many of their members as "conveniently could, should meet on the Sunday fortnight in the temple church, there to have preaching, and to join together in prayer with humiliation and fasting, for the assistance of God's Spirit in all their consultations during this parliament, and for the preservation of the queen's majesty and realms." To avoid all suspicion of their partiality to puritanism, the house wisely referred the nomination of a preacher to such members of the house as were of her majesty's privy council. Though there was nothing in this vote of the house contrary to law, or unbecoming the character of a Christian parliament, yet the queen was no sooner made acquainted with it, than she expressed herself as being highly offended at their presumption thus to encroach on her prerogative. She sent a message to the house by her vice-chamberlain, expressing her surprise at "the rashness of the house of commons in thus invading her supremacy in all ecclesiastical affairs, without her privity and pleasure being first made known." This message gave rise to some warm debates, as being an infringement of the liberties of that house; but it was at last carried, by a small majority, that the vice-chamberlain should acknowledge their fault and implore forgiveness, with a promise not to commit the like offence in future.

The queen having, in the exercise of her prerogative, prevented the ministers from holding their

meetings for religious exercises, and prohibited the parliament from appointing a day for fasting and prayer, she seemed as if determined not to allow more religion in any of her subjects than would reach her own standard. This conjecture is supported by the following fact. The ministers of several neighbouring parishes, who felt deeply concerned for the welfare of the nation, agreed to set apart certain days for private fasting and prayer for the queen and the church; and to exhort the people to repentance and reformation of life, at those times and places in which they could obtain a pulpit. These meetings were held by appointment at Leicester, Coventry, Stamford, and some other places, where the plan was approved by the ministers. But no sooner was the queen informed of them than she sent a warm message to the archbishop to suppress them immediately, as being set up without authority, and in defiance of her prerogative.

A severe act was passed in this session of parliament (1580) intended to bear equally on both papists and puritans. It was entitled "An act to retain the queen's subjects in their due obedience." By this act it was made treason for any priest or Jesuit to proselyte any of her majesty's subjects from the established church to the Romish religion. The person reconciled to the church of Rome was also declared guilty of treason, and for any one to harbour such a person twenty days, was misprision of treason. It was enacted that if any one should

say mass, he should forfeit two hundred marks and suffer a year's imprisonment; and that the act, like a two-edged sword, might cut both ways and reach the puritans as well as the papists, it was further enacted that every person who did not go to church or chapel, or other place where the Common Prayer was used, according to the act of uniformity, should forfeit twenty pounds a month to the queen, and suffer imprisonment till it was paid; that those who absented themselves from church for twelve months should, upon certificate made thereof in the court of king's bench, besides their former fine, be bound with two sufficient sureties in a bond of two hundred pounds for their good behaviour; that every schoolmaster who did not attend some church or chapel where Common Prayer was read should forfeit ten pounds a month, be disqualified for teaching school, and suffer a year's imprisonment.

In the same session of parliament an act of still greater severity was passed by the queen's special direction; but its operation was to be limited to her life. By this act, the writer or publisher of any book, ballad, or letter, containing false, seditious, or scandalous matter, to the defamation of the queen, or the stirring up of rebellion, was to suffer death without the benefit of clergy. What would become of some of our modern scribblers and agitators, who are inflaming the minds of the lower orders of society with their false and scandalous declamations against his majesty's

government, were those laws now in force which were passed in the “golden days of good queen Bess !”

About this time (1580) her majesty, by a stretch of her ecclesiastical prerogative, gave another proof how little real interest she felt in the welfare of the church. She not only refused to listen to the prayer of her subjects for the restoration of the archbishop to his metropolitan authority, but she granted a “commission of concealments” to some of her courtiers, by which they were empowered to inquire into the titles of church lands and livings, and all forfeitures, concealments, and lands, for which the parishes could not produce a legal title, were given to them. This commission, which would have ruined the revenues of the church, was granted at a time when the Jesuits, notwithstanding the recent enactments against them, were in the most zealous manner propagating popery, by holding conventicles in almost every town in England, and openly preaching against the title and authority of the queen. This alarming state of the church awoke the bishops at last from their long sleep of parasitical compliance. They went in a body to the queen, fell down upon their knees before her, and begged that if she had any regard for them, for the church, for religion, she would withdraw this commission. Their appeal had the desired effect; for although the queen at different times had made no scruple about plundering the revenues of the church, she now thought

proper to comply with their request, and the commission was not acted upon.

Public morals, as might be expected under existing circumstances, were at a very low ebb. Profane swearing, drunkenness, gaming, and sabbath-breaking, were common among all ranks of society. Public sports were practised on the Lord's day without any attempt being made to suppress them. On Sunday, January the 13th, 1582, at the Paris Gardens, in Southwark, where a great concourse of people were assembled to witness the public sports, one of the scaffolds crowded with spectators fell with a tremendous crash, by which a number of lives were lost, and a great many persons wounded. The piously disposed considered this as a judgment from heaven for the profanation of the sabbath, and requested the lord mayor to put a stop to such practices. His lordship expressed his regret that he could not act as he otherwise would for want of authority from the queen. After this the lord mayor applied to the court for a commission to suppress such abuses, but the court paid no attention to his application. If the clergy would but conform to the habits and ceremonies, and the people come to the parish churches, the court was perfectly indifferent how they spent the other parts of the sabbath.

After all the intercession which had been made for the restoration of the archbishop, the queen still kept him confined to his own house. On being informed by a friend that the queen expected some

further submission from him, his grace drew up a paper, expressing his grief for having fallen under her majesty's displeasure, and assuring her that his non-compliance was not the effect of any improper motive, or want of sincere affection for her majesty, but a pure regard for religion and the dictates of his conscience. As a proof of his regard for the peace of her majesty's government, he informed her that he had not permitted any exercises to be set up in his diocese since she had given orders to suppress them.

We have no date to determine the time of the primate's restoration, but in the latter part of this year (1582) he was in full possession of his metropolitan power, though it does not appear that he was ever restored to her majesty's favour. Soon after his release, the pious primate was afflicted with the loss of his sight, which disabled him from performing the functions of his office. The queen directed the lord treasurer to offer him an honourable pension and her majesty's favour if he would resign. The archbishop acceded to her majesty's proposal and retired to Croydon, where he died, July 6th, 1583, in the sixty-third year of his age.

From the account given by Strype of archbishop Grindal, we learn that he was a man of a mild and affable temper, with a warm and friendly disposition, united with great firmness and resolution. He was courteous in his deportment, engaging in his conversation, and easy of access. He was neither unduly elevated by prosperity, nor depressed by adversity. He was a very popular

preacher in the reign of Edward VI., and was nominated by Cranmer to a bishopric when little more than thirty years of age; but the king dying soon after, he retired to the continent, to avoid the persecution that followed. Whilst abroad, he formed an intimate acquaintance with the German Reformers, and continued a regular correspondence with several of them. He was instrumental in obtaining a place in which the French protestants might worship in their own way, which was the beginning of the Walloon church, in Threadneedle-street, London, which has been appropriated for the use of the French nation ever since. Having himself a tender conscience, he never acted with rigour against those who from conscientious motives differed from him, unless in compliance with the higher powers. Whilst the queen and her council were stretching the prerogative beyond its proper bounds, to enforce an outward conformity in the church, it was evidently his most anxious concern to promote vital religion in the heart, that the fruit of it might appear in the life. What he prescribed to others he himself practised; for he was not only a learned and useful prelate, but a sincerely pious Christian.

Soon after the death of archbishop Grindal, Whitgift, bishop of Worcester, was translated to the see of Canterbury. The zealous manner in which he had opposed the puritans had raised him in the estimation of the queen, and, on his elevation to the metropolitan chair, she charged him

“to restore the discipline of the church, and the uniformity established by law, which, through the connivance of some prelates, the obstinacy of the puritans, and the power of some noblemen is run quite out of square.” The commands of the queen were promptly obeyed; for the first week after his translation he published the following directions, and sent them to the bishops of his province:—
“That all preaching, catechising, and praying in any private family, where any are present besides the family, be utterly extinguished. 2. That none do preach or catechise, except he will also read the whole service, and administer the sacraments four times a year. 3. That all preachers, and others in ecclesiastical orders, do at all times wear the habits prescribed. 4. That none be admitted to preach unless he be ordained according to the manner of the church of England. 5. That none be admitted to preach, or execute any part of the ecclesiastical function, unless he subscribe the following articles. First, to the queen’s supremacy over all persons, and in all causes, ecclesiastical and civil, within her majesty’s dominions. Secondly, to the book of Common Prayer, and of the ordination of priests and deacons, as containing nothing contrary to the word of God, and that they will use it in all their public ministrations, and no other. Thirdly, to the thirty-nine articles of the church of England, agreed upon in the synod of 1562, and afterwards confirmed by parliament.”

The publication of these articles produced a

powerful effect upon the public mind. The most eminent civil lawyers gave it as their opinion that his grace, by imposing those articles upon the clergy, before he had obtained the authority of the great seal, had incurred the penalties of a premu-nire. But his grace well knew that if he had acted contrary to law his conduct met the appro-bation of the highest authority in the land, and consequently, at his first metropolitan visitation, he insisted upon the above subscriptions. The majority of the ministers now clearly saw that if they submitted to such articles, upon the mere dictum of the primate, it would tend to rivet a yoke upon their own necks which they were unable to bear. The number of ministers who refused to subscribe at this visitation was two hundred and thirty-three, who were all suspended and deprived of their livings in the church. The suspended ministers wrote to the queen, humbly imploring her majesty to take their extreme case into her gracious consideration; but to their prayer she returned no answer. They afterwards addressed the archbishop and the lords of the council, praying to be allowed either a friendly conference or a public disputation; but with neither could they be indulged. The silencing so many of the most pious ministers, by which numbers of churches were left without having any service performed in them, produced general dissatisfaction throughout the kingdom. Numerous letters were sent to the lords of the council, from gentlemen of the first

respectability in the vacant parishes, stating, that the occasional supplies they now had in their churches were men of the most dissolute lives, without either character or abilities for the ministry. A letter was sent from the council to the archbishop, informing him of the complaints, and most respectfully requesting him, for the sake of religion, to remove the cause. The reply of the archbishop proves that the interference of the council failed to procure any relief to the oppressed clergy. He told them "that the cause of the clergy did not lie before them,—that it was not for him to sit in his place if every curate in his diocese must dispute with him,—nor could he do his duty to the queen if he might not proceed without interruption."

We entertain a very different opinion of this prelate from that of his biographer Middleton, who styles him "the undaunted champion of the rites, discipline, and revenues of the church of England," and asserts, that "her establishment under God, to this day, may be ascribed to his zeal and abilities." He tells us further, "that which most concerned him," on entering upon his episcopal power, "was to see the established uniformity of the church in so great disorder, as it was from the non-complying puritans, who, taking advantage of his predecessors easiness in that respect, were possessed of a great many ecclesiastical benefices and preferments, in which they were supported by some of the principal men at court."

Whatever other faults Whitgift might have,

certainly no one will ever charge him with being too easy in his dealings with those who differed in opinion from him. For, although he was invested with the metropolitan power, he thought it too feeble to compel the puritans to submit to that uniformity in the church which he considered so essential to its stability. To enable him to perfect the work he had so much at heart, he solicited the queen to appoint a new ecclesiastical commission, and supported his prayer with the following reasons. "1. Because the puritans condemn the ecclesiastical censures. 2. Because the commission may order a search for seditious books, and examine the writers or publishers upon oath, which a bishop cannot. 3. Because the ecclesiastical commission can punish by fines, which are very commodious to the government; or by imprisonment, which will strike more terror into the puritans. 4. Because a notorious fault cannot be notoriously punished but by the commission. 5. Because the whole ecclesiastical law is but a carcase without a soul, unless it be quickened by the commission." The queen, who never required urging to the use of harsher measures, readily appointed a new high commission, with powers little inferior to a spiritual inquisition, the severe effects of which were soon felt.

The court of high commission* being formed,

* This court was thus called because it claimed a larger jurisdiction and higher powers than the ordinary courts of the bishops; its jurisdiction extended over the whole kingdom,

the archbishop drew up a form of examination, containing twenty-four articles, which he sent to the bishops of his province, enjoining them to summon all such clergy as in their respective dioceses were suspected of nonconformity, and to require them to answer those articles severally upon oath *ex officio mero*,—to subscribe to the queen's supremacy, the book of Common Prayer, and the thirty-nine articles of religion. These instructions soon brought plenty of employment to the commissioners. If any parishioner was disposed to do his minister an injury, he had only to inform the commissioners that the clergyman was suspected of puritanism, upon which a pursuivant was sent, at the expence of ten-pence a mile, with a citation to summon him before the commissioners, who, without any further ceremony, ordered him to prison until a court sat. When the accused was brought to the bar the court immediately tendered him the oath to answer all questions to the best of his knowledge, by which many were obliged not only to accuse themselves, but frequently to bring their relations and friends into trouble. The person to be examined was not to be acquainted with the interrogatories before-hand, nor to have a copy of his answers, which were lodged with the secretary of the court against the day of his trial. If the commissioners could not and was the same as that vested in the person of Lord Cromwell vicar general to Henry VIII., but now put into commission.

convict him upon his own confession, then they examined their witnesses, but never cleared him upon his own oath. If they could not reach him by their ordinary jurisdiction as bishops, they would then sit as ecclesiastical commissioners,—and if they could not convict him upon any statute, then they had recourse to their obsolete law ecclesiastical; so that the prisoner seldom knew by what law he was to be tried, or how to prepare for his defence. When Lord Burleigh, the treasurer, had read the twenty-four articles, and saw how they were operating upon the clergy, he wrote the following letter to the archbishop, which contains the opinion of that great statesman, on the principle and operation of the High Commission.

IT MAY PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

“I AM sorry to trouble you so oft as I do, but I am more troubled myself, not only with many private petitions of sundry ministers, recommended for persons of credit and peaceable in their ministry, who are greatly troubled by your grace and your colleagues in commission; but I am daily charged by counsellors and public persons with neglect of my duty, in not staying your vehement proceedings against ministers, whereby papists are greatly encouraged, and the queen’s safety endangered.—I have read over your twenty-four articles, in a Romish style, of great length and curiosity, to examine all manner of ministers in this time, without distinction of persons, to be

executed *ex officio mero*. And I find them so curiously penned, so full of branches and circumstances, that I think the inquisition of Spain used not so many questions to comprehend and to trap their priests. I know your canonists can defend these with all their particles; but surely, under correction, this judicial and canonical sifting poor ministers is not to edify or reform. And, in charity, I think they ought not to answer to all these nice points, except they were notorious papists or heretics. I write with the testimony of a good conscience. I desire the peace and unity of the church. I favour no sensual and wilful recusant; but I conclude, according to my simple judgment, this kind of proceeding is too much favouring of the Romish inquisition; and as a device rather to seek for offenders than to reform any. It is not charitable to send poor ministers to your common registrar to answer upon so many articles at an instant, without a copy of the articles or their answers.—I pray your grace bear with this one (perchance) fault, that I have willed the ministers not to answer these articles, except their consciences may suffer them.

July 15, 1584.

W. CECIL."

The archbishop was so far from being moved by his lordship's letter to deal more mildly with the clergy, that he wrote him a long reply, in vindication of his conduct from the practice of the starchamber, the court of Marches, &c. He also

sent him two papers of reasons, one to justify the articles, and the other the manner of proceeding *ex officio mero*. The reasons assigned by his grace in support of his proceedings are,—1. If we proceed only by presentment and witnesses, then papists, Brownists, and family-men would expect the like measure. 2. It is hard to get witnesses against the puritans, because most of the parishioners favour them, and therefore will not present them, nor appear against them. 3. There is great trouble and charge in examining witnesses, and sending for them from a distance. 4. If archbishops and bishops should be driven to use proofs by witnessing only, the execution of the law would be partial, their charges in procuring witnesses would be intolerable, and they should not be able to make quick despatch enough with the sectaries." Such were the arguments by which this "champion of the church" defended his violent proceedings.

His lordship, finding that no good would result from disputing with the archbishop singly, transferred the controversy to the lords of the council, who wrote to the archbishop and bishop of London, in favour of the deprived ministers. In their letter to the bishops, they inform them,— "That they had received sundry complaints, out of divers counties, of proceedings against a great number of ecclesiastical persons; some parsons, some vicars, some curates, but all preachers; some of them deprived, and others suspended, &c. &c.,

—that hitherto they had taken no notice of these things, hoping their lordships would have stayed their violent proceedings, especially against such as did earnestly instruct the people against popery. But hearing of great numbers suspended lately, and that no divine service of any kind is performed in most of the vacant places,—that in some of the places the cures are supplied by men devoid both of character and learning, and whose conduct is notorious for every vice. Against such improper characters the council had heard of no proceedings,—they therefore pray their lordships to exercise their charity toward their clergy, that the people may not be deprived of their diligent, learned, and zealous pastors for a few points ceremonial, which entangled their consciences.”

This letter was signed by eight lords of the council, and, to give effect to their remonstrance, they subjoined a list of names, arranged under their distinct denominations. In the first column were the names of learned ministers deprived,—in the second, the names of unlearned and vicious persons continued,—in the third, those of pluralists and non-residents, against whom the council had heard of no inquisition.” The only favour this remonstrance produced for the puritans, as the non-complying ministers were then called, was a kind of conference between the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of Winchester on the one part, and Dr. Sparke and Mr. Travers on the other, in the presence of the earl of Leicester,

Lord Gray, and Sir Francis Walsingham. The conference was held in the bishop's palace at Lambeth, and the subjects discussed were the objectional parts of the Common Prayer, &c. At the close of the conference, which continued two days, the dissatisfaction of each party with the other was mutual,—nor is this an uncommon case in controversies, for the chief aim of the combatants is to convince, and not to be convinced.

The affairs of the church were in a high state of fermentation, when the parliament met in November, 1584. The puritans, despairing of any other relief, resolved to make a formidable appeal to the house of commons. Three petitions were presented to the house the same day by different members. One was, "to restore liberty to godly preachers,"—another was, "for them to exercise and continue their ministry,"—and the other was, "for a speedy supply of able ministers to the vacant churches." During the discussion which took place on presenting the above petitions, Dr. Turner referred them to a bill and book which he had once offered to the house. The bill was entitled, "An act concerning the subscription of ministers," and proposes "that no other subscription be required of any minister or preacher in the church of England than what is enjoined by the 13th of Elizabeth." The book contained thirty-four articles of complaint. But by the advice of the house the substance of the petitions was reduced to sixteen articles, in which state, on

the motion of the doctor, they were taken to the house of lords, with a request for them to join the commons in presenting them as a humble suit to the queen.

Instead of the lords joining the commons, as requested, the lord treasurer and the archbishop of York brought an answer from the lords to this effect:—That in their opinion many of the articles proposed were unnecessary,—that provision was made for the rest,—and that uniformity in divine worship was settled by act of parliament. This reply of the lords was far from giving satisfaction to either the commons or the country. A most affecting petition was sent to the queen and parliament, in the name of thousands of the neglected people of England, who loudly complained that in many congregations “they had none to break the bread of life, or preach the word of God.” The complainants stated that there were thousands of parishes destitute of the necessary means of salvation, and that the people were exposed to the most rigorous persecution for going to hear the Gospel in other parishes, when they had no preaching in their own. The bishop of Winchester, in the name of his brethren, drew up a summary reply to the petition, but proposed no remedy for the evil complained of.

The commons, from a conviction that the bishop’s reply would neither satisfy the country nor meet the exigency of the case, ordered a bill to be brought in immediately against pluralities and

non-residence, and for appeals from the ecclesiastical courts. The bill passed readily through the house of commons, but was powerfully opposed in the house of lords by the two archbishops and the bishop of Winchester, who made long speeches against it, affirming that if pluralities were not allowed, neither cathedral ministers nor professors in the universities could subsist. Many of the lords temporal were in favour of the bill, but the bench of bishops threw it out.

The fate of this bill fired the commons with resentment against the bishops, whose power in the spiritual courts they determined, if possible, to limit. On the re-assembling of parliament after the holydays, 1584, they ordered several bills to be brought in, one of which was, for swearing the bishops in the courts of Westminster-hall, that they should act nothing contrary to the common law of the land; another was to reduce their fees; a third was for liberty to marry at all times of the year; the fourth was for the qualification of ministers; and the fifth was for restoring discipline in the church. The act for qualifying ministers annuls all popish ordinations, and disqualifies such as were not capable of preaching, as well as those who were convicted of profaneness, or any kind of immorality; but obliges the successor to allow the deprived minister a sufficient maintenance, at the discretion of the justices of the quarter sessions; and, if the living was too small to support both, the deficiency to be made up by a parish rate.

This bill, and the bill for marrying at all times of the year, were passed by the commons, which so alarmed the archbishop that he wrote a letter to the queen on the following day, informing her of the disobedience of the commons to her majesty's orders, not to interfere with the affairs of the church. He advised her majesty, "that if it were found necessary to make any alteration it might be done by a canon from the convocation, and then by her majesty's authority it might be observed or dispensed with at pleasure; but, if it were passed by act of parliament, it could only be annulled by an act of parliament."

The queen was highly pleased with the plan of the archbishop, and immediately sent a message by the lord treasurer to the commons, reproving them for encroaching upon her supremacy, and for attempting what she had forbidden. She commanded the speaker, if any bills should be exhibited touching a reformation in the church, upon his allegiance not to read them.

The conduct of the queen towards the non-conforming clergy was exceedingly pleasing to the papists, who at that time were conspiring against her both at home and abroad. The pope had published his bull of excommunication against Elizabeth, and absolved her subjects from their oath of allegiance, and had engaged his agents to dispatch her. But, by a merciful providence, the plot was discovered before a favourable opportunity offered for putting it into execution. The pope,

the king of Spain, and cardinal Allen, were at the head of this plot, the object of which was to murder the queen, depose king James of Scotland, and marry Mary queen of Scots to an English Roman catholic nobleman, Thomas Howard, brother to the late duke of Norfolk. It was determined that he should be elected king of England, and that the crown should be settled upon his heirs. The agent employed to murder the queen was one William Parry, a Welch gentleman, and a member of the house of commons. The plan was for him to have killed her when she was riding out,—and his authority for committing the murder was the blessing of pope Pius V., with a plenary indulgence and remission of all his sins. He was further encouraged in the murderous design by cardinal Allen, who put his book into Parry's hands, wherein he maintains that it is not only lawful, but meritorious and honourable, to murder princes that are under the ban of excommunication. Lord Paget and several others left the kingdom on the plot being discovered. Parry was condemned on his own confession, and executed.

After the discovery of this plot, the parliament passed a severe act against the Roman catholic priests. By this act, all popish priests were to depart the realm within forty days;—should any of them afterwards return, they were to be deemed guilty of high treason,—and any person harbouring them would be guilty of felony.—It was also enacted that all English priests residing in foreign

seminaries, if they did not return within six months, and make their submission before a bishop, or two magistrates, should be pronounced guilty of high treason,—that whoever should convey either money or goods to students, or others in such seminaries, should incur the penalty of a premunire, with loss of goods, and perpetual exile,—that if any person should know of any popish priest or Jesuit lurking in any part of the kingdom, and not discover him within four days, he should be fined and imprisoned at the queen's pleasure,—that if any man should be suspected of being a priest or Jesuit, and refuse to submit to be examined on the subject, he should be imprisoned till he did submit,—that those who should send their children to popish colleges or seminaries should pay a fine of one hundred pounds,—that if those who were sent thither did not return within one year, they should be unqualified to succeed as heirs to any estate, &c.

At the prorogation of parliament, her majesty made a short speech, which, for its originality, we shall here insert. She observes,—“that some people had been very busy in finding fault with the clergy, which was a censure that reflected upon herself; for, since God had made her an over-ruler of the church, her negligence could not be excused if any schism or heresy was connived at. Some misbehaviour and omission there might be amongst the body of the clergy, and such miscarriage is common to all considerable offices; all which, if

you, my lords of the clergy, do not amend, I will depose you. Look you therefore well to your charges."

During the sitting of parliament, in the year 1586, the puritans made another attempt to obtain parliamentary relief. With their petition to the house of commons, they presented a survey of several counties, taken in that and the preceding years, in order to give a just view of the state of the church. From the above survey it appears that there were in England ten thousand parish churches, and not more than two thousand preachers, so that there were nearly eight thousand parishes without ministers;—that in some places, if the people would hear a sermon, they must travel five, ten, and in some counties twenty miles, for which they were fined one shilling a Sabbath for not being at their own parish churches, although there was no service performed in them. On the above statement, a bill was brought into the house of commons, praying for a further reformation in the church, and in reference to a book entitled, "A Book of the Form of Common Prayer," &c.—"that every thing therein contained may be from henceforth authorized and put in use and practice throughout all her majesty's dominions." The book contained prayers to be used before and after sermon, but allowed liberty for variation, as the minister might pray and give thanks in the words there prescribed, or such like. In the creed it leaves the article of Christ's descent into hell

more at large. It omits three of the thirty-nine articles, viz., the 34th, 35th, and 36th. It proposes to take the jurisdiction of the church out of the hands of the spiritual courts, and place it in an assembly of ministers and elders in every shire, who should have power to examine, approve, and present ministers to the several parishes for their election, and, with the consent of the bishop, to depose them for bad conduct.

When the bill was brought into the house a warm debate was entered into by several members in support of their privileges, maintaining that they had a right to speak on religious as well as civil subjects. In the course of the debate, some strong expressions were used against the arbitrary proceedings of the bishops, for which Mr. Wentworth and several others were sent to the Tower.

The leading members, perceiving that all attempts to obtain relief from that source would be fruitless, would not suffer the bill to be read. The queen sent for both the bill and petition from the house, and directed the speaker to inform them "that she was already settled in her religion, and would not begin again; that changes in religion were dangerous; that it was not reasonable for them to call in question the established religion, at a time when others were attempting to overthrow it; that she had considered the objections, and looked upon them as frivolous; and that the platform itself was most prejudicial to her crown and the peace of her government." These repeated

appeals of the puritans to the house of commons for relief so incensed the queen that, when a general pardon was preparing to be passed in parliament, she ordered an exception to be made of such as committed any offence against the act of uniformity, or were publishers of seditious books or pamphlets.

The last lingering hope of the puritans of receiving any redress from their superiors was just expiring, when they resolved, in one of their assemblies, not to make any more applications for help, but try to effect a reformation in the best manner they could, and leave the consequences to God. They revised their book entitled, "The holy Discipline of the Church described in the Word of God," which was subscribed by above five hundred names, all beneficed ministers of the church of England, of unexceptionable character, and many of them of the university of Cambridge, where they had strong and powerful interest.

On the death of Mary Stewart, queen of Scots, who was beheaded at Fotheringay castle, in Northamptonshire, February 8th, 1587, the Roman Catholic princes took the alarm, and prepared for revenge. Philip II., king of Spain, who had long meditated the conquest of England, now hastened to invade it by a powerful fleet, to which he gave the name of the Invincible Armada. His grand object was to support the catholic religion, and exterminate the Reformation. In this pious work he fully expected to succeed, being armed with the sword

of St. Peter, whose successor, pope Sixtus V., had pronounced his benediction upon the enterprise, and with all the liberality of a holy pontiff, gave him the crown of England on the simple condition of his taking possession of it. This period was felt by all the protestant powers of Europe as the momentous crisis which was to decide for ever the fate of their religion. The pious sought assistance from God by fervent prayer, whilst her majesty made every preparation both by sea and land for a most formidable resistance. But it pleased the divine Being, who holdeth "the winds in his fists," partly by storms and partly through the valour and skill of the queen's admirals and sea-captains, that not a Spaniard set his foot on English ground, and not a ship was left uninjured to carry back to Spain the news of their disaster.

After the defeat of the Spanish Armada, the queen summoned a parliament, which met on the 4th of February, 1588, for the purpose of providing the means of defraying the extraordinary expenses of the year, and to make some new laws against the papists. In this session an act was passed for punishing bribery in the elections of fellows and officers in colleges and cathedrals, and for preventing simoniacal presentations. It also enacted that those who received money for conferring orders or licences to preach should forfeit forty pounds, and the person thus ordained ten pounds, together with whatever preferment he might procure within seven years after.

The puritans having put their zeal for the queen and the protestant religion to the test by enlisting in the army and navy, during the threatened Spanish invasion, thought this a favourable opportunity of addressing parliament for some favour in point of subscription. On the petition being presented to the house, one of the members moved that an inquiry be made how far the bishops have exceeded the laws in the prosecution of her majesty's protestant subjects. Another member moved for reviving the bill against pluralities and non-residents. This bill passed the house of commons and was sent up to the lords; but the queen prohibited the house of lords from proceeding with it, and commanded certain members of the house of commons to be taken into custody, for daring to meddle with the affairs of religion without her special authority. Thus all the expectations of relief entertained by the puritans were cut off for the present.

The convocation granted the queen two subsidies, and, having flattered her with the title of goddess, prayed her to protect the church, and assured her that the passing of such a bill as had been introduced in the house of commons would be attended with the decay of learning, and introduce confusion and barbarism into the church. The archbishop presented some orders to be confirmed by the convocation, the observance of which he intended to enforce in his province. The first related to the constant residence of those who had but a single

benefice, with an exception to prebendaries, chaplains, &c., who were to keep a licensed preaching curate. The second obliged those who had two benefices to reside an equal time on their respective livings, and their absence to be supplied by a licensed curate. The fourth directs that all clergymen guilty of notorious crimes should be removed, and never admitted to any cure again,—that unlearned men should not be admitted to any cure,—and, lastly, that no clergyman should be allowed to keep or remove a curate without the consent of the metropolitan, or the bishop of the diocese.

All hope of compromising matters between the church and puritans being now at an end, the contending parties upbraided each other with the most abusive scurrility as a substitute for sound argument. The public press being shut against the puritans, some of them purchased a private one, and carried it from one county to another to prevent a discovery. From this press, which was at last discovered at Manchester, a great number of satirical pamphlets were issued, abounding with the lowest buffoonery and ridicule, for which some of them had to pay very dear.

The archbishop prepared twenty-two articles of inquiry, upon which, at his visitation, the churchwardens of every parish were examined upon oath. By these articles they were to swear that their minister conformed in all things to the orders of the church, or else to impeach him.—They were required to state whether they knew any of their

neighbours or fellow-parishioners that were common swearers, drunkards, usurers, witches, conjurors, or heretics,—whether they knew any man that had two wives, or woman that had two husbands,—whether they knew any that went to conventicles, or meetings for saying prayers in private houses, or any that were of age that did not receive the sacrament at church three times in the year, and to answer a number of other interrogatories calculated to dissolve all friendship in country towns and set the whole diocess in a flame. When Sir Francis Knollys, one of the privy council, had read the articles, he sent them to the lord treasurer, calling them “articles of inquisition, and highly prejudicial to the royal prerogative.”

By an act of parliament passed in this reign it was made felony, under the penalty of death, to write, or publish any book or ballad, to the defamation of the queen. The construction which the judges put upon the above named buffoonery pamphelts against the bishops was, that the bishops were the queen's officers, and acted under her authority, consequently these libels defamed the queen herself. Under this distorted construction of the act several of the puritan clergy suffered death. One of the sufferers was a Mr. Udal, who had been minister of Kingston-upon-Thames, and was condemned on the evidence of a man who said he had seen papers of that kind in his study, but refused to appear in court, and the hearsay evidence of two others taken in examination, who be-

fore the trial left the country, and wrote word how sorry they were for what they had said. The particulars of this man's hard case may be seen in "Neal's History of the Puritans." Many of the more moderate puritans, who publicly disowned the libels, were brought before the star-chamber, a court composed of twenty noblemen, bishops, counsellors, and judges, nominated by the queen, with herself at the head as chief judge; but, in her absence, the determination was by a majority, the lord chancellor having the casting vote. The decisions of this court were not regulated by any statute law of the land, but solely by the will and pleasure of the queen, and yet they were as binding upon the subject as an act of parliament. The voice of the whole nation was at last raised against such arbitrary proceedings as a species of the vilest slavery.

A new parliament was summoned by the queen, which met in February, 1592, when the famous solicitor Coke was chosen speaker of the house of commons. One of the first motions made in this parliament was an address to the queen, requesting her to name her successor. The queen, on being informed of the motion, sent for Mr. Wentworth the mover, and Messrs. Bromley, Welsh, and Stephens who had seconded it, and committed them all to prison, where Wentworth remained for several years. Those who are most partial to the memory of Elizabeth must allow that this was an unwarrantable exercise of her prerogative, contrary

to law, and the liberty of speech in parliament. But the most remarkable circumstance in this case was that when it was moved in the house to address the queen for the release of their members, it was answered by those privy counsellors who were in the house, "that her majesty had committed them for causes best known to herself,—that the house must not call the queen to account for what she did of her royal authority,—that the causes of their restraint might be high and dangerous,—that her majesty did not like such questions, nor did it become the house to interfere in such matters."

Another bold attempt was made in the house of commons in favour of religious liberty by Mr. Morrice, who moved the house to inquire into the proceedings of the bishops in their spiritual courts,—how far they could justify their inquisition,—their subscriptions,—their binding the queen's subjects to their good behaviour, contrary to the laws of God and of the realm,—their compelling men to take oaths to accuse themselves, and upon their refusal to degrade, deprive, and imprison them at pleasure, and not release them until they had complied. He then presented two bills to the house, one against the oath *ex officio*, and the other against their illegal imprisonments, which last he prayed might be read immediately. His motion was seconded by Sir Francis Knollys, who exclaimed warmly against such abuses, and said that the bishops, by acting against law, had brought themselves into a *premunire*. Mr. Beal, a member

of the council, spoke on the same side, for which the queen forbade him the court, and commanded him to absent himself from parliament.

These debates alarmed the civilians in the house, especially Mr. Dalton, who opposed the reading of the bill, in which he was joined by Sir Robert Cecil, one of her majesty's secretaries, who said that the queen had forbidden them to meddle with the reformation of the church. As soon as the queen was acquainted with the proceedings of the house, she sent for the speaker, Coke, and commanded him to tell the house "that the calling and dissolving of parliaments, the assenting and dissenting to any bills passed there, was a part of her prerogative; and that the calling of this parliament was only that such as neglected the service of the church might be compelled to attend by some sharp laws, the better to provide for the safety of her person and the realm,—that it was not meant that they should meddle with matters of state or causes ecclesiastical,—that she wondered they should attempt a thing so contrary to her commandment,—that she was highly offended at it,—and that it was her royal pleasure that no bill touching any matters of state and causes ecclesiastical should be there exhibited." At the same time Mr. Morrice was seized in the house by a sergeant at arms, discharged from his office in the court of the duchy of Lancaster, disabled from any practice in his profession as a barrister at law, and confined for several years a prisoner in Tutbury castle.

Had the majority of the house of commons possessed a just spirit of English liberty, they would not have so tamely submitted to see their members arrested and sent to prison for inquiring into the conduct of those who had been oppressing the people by acting contrary to law, nor would they have held their seats in the house under a sovereign that prohibited their attempting to redress the grievances of either church or state, and would send for their bills out of the house and cancel them. But this parliament, instead of asserting its own liberty and the liberties of the people, stands charged with passing one of the severest acts of oppression and cruelty that ever was passed by the representatives of a free and protestant nation, or that ever disgraced the English statute book. It is entitled, "An act for the punishment of persons obstinately refusing to come to church, and persuading others to impugn the queen's authority in ecclesiastical causes." It is here enacted, "that if any person above the age of sixteen shall obstinately refuse to repair to some church, chapel, or usual place of common prayer, to hear divine service, for the space of one month, without lawful cause,—or shall at any time, forty days after the end of this session, by printing, writing, or express words, go about to persuade any of her majesty's subjects to deny, withstand, or impugn her majesty's power or authority in causes ecclesiastical,—or shall dissuade them from coming to church, to hear divine service, or receive the sacrament as the law directs,—or shall

be present at any unlawful assembly, conventicle, or meeting, under colour or pretence of any exercise of religion, that all persons so offending, and lawfully convicted, shall be committed to prison without bail till they shall conform and yield themselves to come to church, and sign a declaration of their conformity. But in case the offenders against this statute, being lawfully convicted, shall not submit and sign the declaration within three months, then they shall abjure the realm and go into perpetual banishment. And if they do not depart within the time limited by the quarter sessions or justices of peace, or if they return at any time afterwards without the queen's licence, they shall suffer death without benefit of clergy."

This severe statute, which was levelled as much against the laity as the clergy, placed the nonconformists in a worse case than common felons; for they were allowed the benefit of clergy, but the puritans were not. Some parts of this act exceed in severity any of the statutes of that arbitrary prince Henry VIII. The rigid manner in which it was executed in this and the following reigns brought infinite mischief upon the kingdom; many families were forced into banishment, numbers ended their days in prison, some suffered death, as in cases of treason, and others as the authors of seditious pamphlets; some of whom, when at the gallows, gave such proof of their loyalty by their fervent prayers for the life and happiness of the queen, that they were ashamed of hanging such

men for sedition. It is said that when the queen heard of the loyalty and devotion of the sufferers she regretted their fate, and resolved for the future to send them into banishment instead of putting them to death.

During the long and sanguinary struggles between the reformers and the papists, and the unhappy contentions between the conformists and the nonconformists, there had hitherto been no dispute about the doctrines of faith. But about this time the doctrines of unconditional election and reprobation, the final perseverance of the saints and a limited extent of the Saviour's atonement, began to be pointedly preached against. Both parties made their appeal to the articles of the church of England in support of their opinions; but the party that held the doctrine of general redemption had greatly the advantage, as there is only the seventeenth article in favour of Calvinism, and even that is closed with a caveat, cautioning the reader against its dangerous tendency.

The controversy commenced with a Mr. Barret, at Cambridge, where he preached against the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation, for which he was summoned before the vice-chancellor and heads of colleges, and was obliged to retract his opinion in St. Mary's church. Both parties appealed to the archbishop, and Barret was sent for to Lambeth, where he underwent a severe examination, which closed by charging him with holding certain errors, which he was sentenced to

renounce, and publicly to confess his ignorance and mistake ; but he chose rather to quit the university than comply with the proposed terms. But the controversy did not terminate here ; numbers from this time began to search the Scriptures in support of their creed, by which the doctrine of general redemption became extensively believed.

To prevent the doctrine of general redemption from spreading in the university, the heads of the colleges sent Dr. Whitaker, the queen's professor, and Dr. Tindal, two eminent predestinarians, to the archbishop, who, together with Dr. Fletcher, bishop of London, Dr. Vaughan, bishop of Bangor, and others, drew up the nine following propositions, commonly called "the Lambeth articles ;" to which all the scholars in the university were to profess their belief. The articles are :—

" 1. That God from all eternity has predestinated some persons to life, and reprobated others to death.

" 2. The moving or efficient cause of predestination to life is not foreseen faith or good works, or any other commendable quality in the persons predestinated, but the good will and pleasure of God.

" 3. The number of predestinated is fixed, and cannot be lessened or increased.

" 4. They who are not predestinated to salvation shall be necessarily condemned for their sins.

" 5. A true, lively, and justifying faith, and the sanctifying influence of the Spirit, is not extinguished, nor does it fail or go off, either finally or totally.

"6. A justified person has a full assurance and certainty of the remission of his sins, and of his everlasting salvation by Christ.

"7. Saving grace is not communicated to all men ; neither have all men such a measure of divine assistance that they may be saved if they will.

"8. No person can come to Christ unless it be given him, and unless the Father draws him ; and all men are not drawn by the Father that they may come to Christ.

"9. It is not in every one's will and power to be saved."

In the letter which the archbishop sent to the university with the articles, he desired that the enforcing of them might not be made a public act, but that they should be used privately and with discretion, as they had not yet received the queen's sanction, but that her majesty was fully persuaded of the truth of them. The correctness of the archbishop's statement is very doubtful ; for the queen was no sooner informed of what they had done than she ordered all who had met on the occasion to be prosecuted for a premunire. Through the interest of the archbishop's friends the order for the prosecution was withdrawn, but the queen directed Sir Robert Cecil to acquaint his grace by letter, "that she very much disliked that any allowance had been given by him and his brethren for any such points to be disputed, being a matter tender and dangerous to weak minds,"—and commanded him not to enforce them publicly, or

permit them to be debated in the pulpit. The archbishop apologized by stating that the articles were not intended as any new laws or decrees, but only as an explication of certain points which corresponded with the doctrine professed in the church of England. But in this his grace was greatly mistaken; for had the doctrines of the Lambeth articles been the doctrines of the church of England they would not have been so pointedly opposed as they are in the prayer of consecration in the communion service, which begins thus:—“ Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy tender mercy didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption, who made there, by his own oblation once offered, a *full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction* for the sins of the *whole world.*” The doctrines of general redemption, and the possibility of finally falling from grace, are most clearly stated in the homilies on Christ’s nativity, and the resurrection. The doctrines of the Lambeth articles were at that time the prevailing sentiments of both universities; but it is evident that the church of England was reformed upon the principles of general redemption, though the articles were compiled with a latitude to admit subscription by either party.

But neither the charge of the archbishop to the university not to make the articles a public act, nor her majesty’s command to suspend the urging them, could stifle the controversy to which they

had given birth. Dr. Baro, one of the professors of divinity in the university of Cambridge, delivered his sentiments on the subject in a sermon that he preached before the university, in which he asserted, 1. "That God created all men according to his own likeness in Adam, and consequently to eternal life, from which he rejects no man but on the account of his sins. 2. That Christ died for all mankind, and was a propitiation for the sins of the whole world, original and actual; the remedy provided by him being as extensive as the ruin of the fall. 3. That the promises of eternal life made to us in Christ are to be generally and universally understood, being made as much to Judas as to Peter."

The doctor was summoned before the vice-chancellor and heads of colleges, to account for the doctrines he had advanced in his lectures and sermons; but he was unwilling to enter into a controversy with the university, and equally reluctant to renounce the doctrines, which he believed to be in accordance with the word of God. As Baro was not disposed to make those concessions which the heads of colleges required, they sent a letter to secretary Cecil, informing him, "that for the last fourteen or fifteen years the doctor had taught in his lectures, and preached in his sermons, divers points of doctrine contrary to those which have been taught and read ever since her majesty's reign, and agreeable to the errors of popery." Cecil was very unwilling that the university should be deprived of Dr. Baro's valuable services, and

wrote to the vice-chancellor to stop all further proceedings against him. But such was the opposition he met with from the heads of the university that the following year he resigned his professorship, and retired to London.

The earl of Leicester and archbishop Whitgift were both actively engaged this summer in directing the elections for a new parliament, which met in October, 1597. But, after all their anxious care to have a parliament so modelled as not to meddle with the affairs of the church, they were not a little mortified when, at an early period of the sittings, several bills were brought in to regulate the abuses of the spiritual courts. But these bills all shared a similar fate with former ones on the same subject: they were quashed by a message from the queen, who acted upon the advice given her by the archbishop, “not to proceed in the affairs of the church by statute law, which none but a parliament could repeal, but by canons, which she could confirm or dispense with at her pleasure.”

The ecclesiastical courts were become an insufferable grievance. The oppressions which the people endured from their expensive proceedings induced many to remove their causes into Westminster-hall, by getting prohibitions to stay proceedings in the bishop’s court, or in the high commission. These prompt proceedings alarmed the archbishop, who, to support the civilians, drew up certain queries to be considered

by the lords and judges concerning prohibitions. He also annexed a list of cases, wherein the spiritual courts had been interrupted by the temporal jurisdiction, and also of causes that had been taken out of the high commission, and the court of delegates.* But notwithstanding all the efforts of Whitgift, and his successor Bancroft, the number of prohibitions increased annually. The nobility, gentry, and judges were too wise to subject their estates and liberties to a number of artful civilians, versed in laws of very doubtful authority, and strangers to the common and statute law, without the check of prohibition, especially as, ever since the Reformation, the canon law had been controlled by the laws and statutes of the realm.

About this time, the long and severe contest between the puritans and high church party came to a cessation, just like resolute combatants that had fought themselves out of breath. The church party considered their opponents vanquished; but, notwithstanding the severity with which the penal laws had been executed against the puritans, their numbers had considerably increased. Both parties were anticipating a change on the death of the queen, and, from the nature of things, that event could not be very distant. The same motive which induced the one to adopt more lenient measures

* The court of high commission was founded by letters patent from the queen, and the court of delegates by a special commission upon an appeal to the court of chancery.

led the other to exercise more of the “patience of hope.” The court party knew that the next heir to the crown was a presbyterian, and they might fear lest he should turn the tables against them.

The queen's last parliament met in October, 1602, when not even the remembrance of former repulses could prevent the commons from reviving the attacks upon the ecclesiastical courts. One bill was brought in against bishop's leases and fines, another against pluralities and non-residents, and another against commissioners and archdeacons' courts. Many complaints were presented before the house against the proceedings of the ordinaries *ex mero officio*, without due presentments preceding,—and against the frequent keeping their courts, so that the churchwardens were sometimes cited to two or three spiritual courts at the same time. Complaints were also made of the great number of apparitors and petty summoners, who seized upon people for trifling offences,—of admission of curates by officials without testimonials, or the bishop's knowledge,—of scandalous commutations of penance, &c., &c. The queen prohibited the debating of these subjects in the house, but desired the archbishop to write to his brethren to reform the grievances complained of. Nothing more was attempted in ecclesiastical affairs by the commons during this session of parliament, which was dissolved on the 19th of December, after granting the queen the largest subsidy she had received during her whole reign.

The queen's health had hitherto been very good, but she now began rapidly to decline under the infirmities of age, and a visible decay of natural spirits. Some ascribed the change in her spirits to the effect her affliction had on the nervous system; but others suppose it was the workings of her conscience, whilst reflecting on her conduct to Mary queen of Scots,—her severity to the puritans,—but most for having beheaded the earl of Essex, of whom, notwithstanding the disparity of their ages, she was passionately fond. But, whatever might be the cause, the setting sun of this magnanimous queen was enveloped in disconsolate gloom. Her affliction increasing, she retired to Richmond for the benefit of the air, after which she was almost unapproachable to every one but the archbishop, who frequently prayed with her. When it was perceived that she was near her end, the lords of the council desired her to name her successor. She replied, "My throne is the throne of kings, and no mean person shall be my successor." The secretary remarked that her words were very ambiguous, and it was of vital importance that the council should receive an explicit intimation of her pleasure; she replied, "The king of Scots, my nearest relation, shall succeed me." This was the last act of the renowned queen Elizabeth, who died the 24th day of March, 1602, in the seventieth year of her age, and forty-fifth of her reign.

The pens of poets and historians have rarely vied more with each other in attempting to emblazon

the memory of a monarch than in the case of queen Elizabeth. To express an opinion differing only a shade from what has been so generally received may expose such an adventurer to the lash of a biassed critic; but, from a dispassionate view of the prominent facts in her history, we can by no means join in those unqualified encomiums which have been lavished upon her. It must be admitted that she possessed the leading qualifications for governing,—learning, sense, and courage, in such a degree as is rarely found in the female character. But, whilst she inherited some of the best, she had a due proportion of the worst qualities of her father Henry VIII. The free and fluent manner in which she could converse with foreign ambassadors in their own languages, raised in them an exalted idea of her extraordinary abilities, especially as they saw her surmount all the difficulties created by her powerful enemies abroad, and the more subtle machinations of her secret enemies at home. This has generally been ascribed to her own superior talents, but had the fate of her affairs depended on herself alone, they would most certainly have failed. At no period was England ever more favoured with talented men than in the reign of Elizabeth, and she had the prudence to employ them, and thereby procured to herself the meed of praise due to their merits. Elizabeth professed great love to the church; but we are at a loss how to reconcile such a profession with her keeping the sees of Bristol, Ely, and Oxford vacant for twenty

years, and appropriating their revenues to her own use. Nor can we praise her conduct in committing the members of parliament to prison, for introducing a bill in support of the laws and liberties of the land. Her treatment of Mary queen of Scots was an open violation of the law of nations, equalled only by the prevarications with which she shrouded her death. She was as proud of her prerogative as her father Henry VIII., and made the most arbitrary means subservient to its support. She supported the Reformation, but would not admit an opinion on either doctrine or discipline in the church that did not emanate from herself. Having blunted the tender feelings of her own conscience, by conforming to the popish rites during the reign of her sister Mary, she could make no allowance for those whose consciences were less pliant. Her abilities for governing were far superior to those of her sister Mary; but they were sisters in bigotry, one for the prerogative and the other for popery. The name of Elizabeth is deservedly handed down to posterity as that of a wise and successful princess,—who by employing such talented men in the court, the camp, and the navy, raised the character of the English nation to an elevation which all the efforts of her enemies, and the revolutions of two hundred years, have only tended the more fully to establish.

CHAPTER V.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF JAMES I., IN 1602, TO HIS
DEATH IN 1625.

THE hopes and fears of the religious part of the British community were never more variously excited on the accession of any monarch than on that of king James I. The Roman catholics, from James having been born a papist, and never having shown himself unfriendly towards them, were in expectation that he would grant them privileges little inferior to those of the established church. The conduct of the king in Scotland had raised the hopes of the puritan party very high. He had been educated by the Scotch presbyterians, had subscribed the solemn league and covenant, and declared, in the general assembly at Edinburgh, held in 1590, when standing with his bonnet off, and his hands lifted up to heaven, he “praised God that he was born in the time of the light of the gospel, and in such a place as to be king of such a church, the purest kirk in the world. The church of Geneva,” says he, “keep Easter and Christmas, what have they for them? They have no institution. As for our neighbour kirk of England, their service is an evil; they say mass in English; they want nothing of the mass but the

liftings. I charge you, my good ministers, doctors, elders, nobles, gentlemen, and barons, to stand to your purity, and to exhort the people to do the same; and I, forsooth, as long as I brook my life, shall maintain the same."

The church party expected that, notwithstanding his being born of popish parents, and educated among the puritans, to whose form of church government he had expressed such a strong attachment, yet as the church party in England were by far the most numerous and influential, he would see it to be his interest to support the church as he found it established.

Each party vied with the other in congratulating his majesty on his accession to the crown, and in imploring his protection. As soon as the queen was dead, the archbishop of Canterbury sent his dean, Mr. Nevill, with an express into Scotland, in the name of all the bishops and clergy of the church of England, to express their loyalty, to receive the king's commands respecting the ecclesiastical courts, and to recommend the church of England to his royal countenance and protection. This message was very graciously received by the king, who directed the dean to assure the English clergy that he would uphold the government of the church as it was left by the late queen. This promise from the king was as a cordial to the timid mind of the archbishop, and tended to dissipate what he often called the Scotch mist.

As soon as James received intelligence from the

council that he was proclaimed king of England, he lost no time in taking leave of Scotland. He left Edinburgh on the 5th of April, and arrived in London on the 8th of May, 1603. Whilst on his journey the puritans presented their millenary petition, so called, signed by about eight hundred ministers of the church of England, praying for a reformation of certain rites and ceremonies in the church. Among other things of which they complained were the oppressions of the spiritual courts, the oath *ex officio*, and marriage licences. Several similar petitions were presented to the king, in the different counties through which he passed. The heads of the universities were greatly alarmed at so formidable an attack on the ecclesiastical constitution, and, in a convocation convened for the purpose at Cambridge, a decree was passed, "that whosoever in the university should openly oppose by word or writing, or in any other way, the doctrine or discipline of the church of England established by law, or any part thereof, should be suspended, *ipso facto*, from any degree already taken, and be disabled from taking any degree in future." About the same time the university of Oxford published an answer to the millenary petition, accusing the ministers who had signed it of a factious spirit, and as the advocates of a limited monarchy, that would subject the titles of kings to the approbation of the people. They then commended the present government of the church as best calculated to promote an unlimited subjection.

Neither the addresses nor the remonstrances against them produced any effect on the king's mind; for he had already determined what part he should act in church affairs. But, to give his proceedings the appearance of impartiality, he appointed a conference to be held at Hampton Court, of which he would be moderator; and by a proclamation he commanded both parties till then to suspend all further interference.

This famous conference was held in the drawing room, within the privy chamber at Hampton Court, in January, 1604. The disputants on both sides, who were nominated by the king, consisted of nine bishops and as many dignitaries of the church on one side, and four puritan ministers on the other. The church party were Whitgift, archbishop of Canterbury; Bancroft, bishop of London; Matthew, bishop of Durham; Bilson, bishop of Winchester; Babington, bishop of Worcester; Rudd, bishop of St. David's; Watson, bishop of Chichester; Robinson, bishop of Carlisle; Dove, bishop of Peterborough; six deans, and three others. The puritan ministers were Dr. J. Raynolds, Dr. T. Sparkes, professors of divinity in Oxford, and Mr. Chadderton, and Mr. Knewstubs, of Cambridge.

On the 18th of January, the day appointed by the king, the bishops and dignitaries of the church were brought into his presence without the puritan ministers. The king opened the conference by acquainting them with his reasons for consulting

them alone,—that many complaints had been made, and he wished the occasion to be removed,—also he wished to satisfy himself respecting the usages, worship, and discipline of the church. He then congratulated himself on “the happiness he felt on being brought into the promised land,—that he sat among grave and learned men, and was not, as formerly, a king without state and honour, nor in a place where order was banished and beardless boys would brave him to his face.”

His majesty stated an objection to the confirmation of children, as if it implied a confirmation of baptism, which would not be complete without it. The archbishop replied that confirmation was not understood as a sacrament in the church of England, or as a corroboration of baptism; but the office, standing as it did, might with propriety be called “an examination of children with a confirmation.” The king next objected to the absolution in the church, as bearing too great a resemblance to the pope’s pardon. The archbishop replied by referring the king to the forms of confession and absolution in the communion service, in which, after perusing it, he acquiesced. The king expressed his disapprobation of baptism being administered by midwives and lay persons. On this subject the bishops were far from being agreed. The archbishop contended that the church did not allow of baptism being performed by midwives, or other lay persons. The bishop of London insisted that the compilers of the Common Prayer did really design that pri-

vate persons might baptize in case of necessity, agreeably to the practice of the primitive church. The king wished the bishops to consult on the subject, but gave it as his opinion that baptism should be administered by none but lawful ministers. The king next inquired, whether the solemn censure of excommunication was not frequently executed on very frivolous occasions, and why it was performed by lay chancellors and commissioners, and not by the bishops with their chapter. The bishops not being prepared to rebut the charge, of having excommunicated for small crimes, the king suggested that the name should be changed, but the censure retained, or an equivalent appointed. The above is the substance of the first day's conference.

A somewhat different version is given of this in "Neal's History of the Puritans," founded upon the account sent by Mr. Galloway, who was present at the conference, and said "to have been mended by the king's own hand." He states "that the bishops craved with great earnestness, on their knees, that nothing might be altered, lest popish recusants punished by penal statutes for their disobedience, and the puritans punished by privation from their livings for non-conformity, should say they had just cause to insult them, as men who had travailed to bind them to that which by their own mouths now was confessed to be erroneous." Though Neal's History contains much valuable information, it is far from being impartial.

At the second day's conference, when all the parties were present, the king in his opening speech gave them to understand what part he should act, as will appear from the following extract:—He stated “that, following the example of all Christian princes, who usually began their reigns with the establishment of the church, he had now, at his entering upon the throne, assembled them, for settling a uniform order in the same,—for planting unity, removing dissensions, and reforming abuses, which were naturally incident to all politic bodies. And that he might not be misapprehended, and his designs in assembling them misconstrued, he farther declared, that his meaning was not to make innovation of the government established in the church, which he knew was approved of God, but to hear and examine the complaints that were made, and remove the occasion of them; therefore he desired the petitioners to begin, and to show what were their grievances.”* The king having called for a statement of the complaints, Dr. Raynolds, as head of the puritan delegation, humbly requested, “1. That the doctrine of the church might be preserved pure according to God's word. 2. That good pastors might be planted in all churches to preach the same. 3. That the Book of Common Prayer might be fitted to the more increase of piety. 4. That the church government might be sincerely ministered according to God's word.” A detail of all the disputed points, on

* Rapin, vol. ix. p. 245.

which they debated for four hours, would be too prolix for general edification. The king acted more than the part of a moderator, as it gave him an opportunity of displaying his talents and learning, by answering all the objections of the puritan ministers, which left the bishops nothing to do but extol his superior wisdom. The king concluded his replies with his favourite maxim, "No bishop, no king." On leaving his chair, he said aloud to his courtiers, "If this be all they have to say, I will make them conform, or I will drive them out of the land."

The nobles soon discovered the king's foible, and gave him the flattering title of "the Solomon of the age;" and bishop Bancroft, that he might not be behind the lay lords in adulation, protested, upon his knees, "that his heart melted for joy, because God Almighty of his singular mercy had given them such a king as since Christ's time had not been." At the third day's conference, the bishops and deans, with the civilians, were first called into the privy chamber, to satisfy the king about the high commission and the oath *ex officio*, in which they met with no difficulty, as they were main pillars of his prerogative. When the king expressed his approbation of the oath, the archbishop was quite elated, and exclaimed, "Undoubtedly your majesty speaks by the special assistance of God's Spirit." A committee of bishops and privy counsellors was appointed to devise means for reducing the charges in the high com-

mission, and to provide a more efficient supply of learned ministers for the vacant parishes.

The four puritan divines were then called in, not to dispute, but to hear the few alterations made in the Prayer-Book, to which they assented; but Mr. Chadderton fell on his knees, and humbly prayed that the surplice and cross might not be urged on some godly ministers in Lancashire, and Mr. Knewstubs sought the same favour for some ministers in Suffolk. The bishops were about to reply, when the king with a stern countenance said, “We have taken pains here to conclude in a resolution for uniformity, and you will undo all by preferring the credit of a few private men to the peace of the church. This is just the Scotch argument, when any thing was settled which crossed their fancies, the only reason for their disobedience was, because it would not consist with their credit to change their opinion. But I will have no more of this arguing; therefore let them conform, and that quickly too, or they shall hear of it. A time shall be limited by the bishops of every diocese, and such as will not submit, whoever they are, let them be removed.”

Thus closed this partial conference, in which the king and the bishops concluded every thing in the absence of the other party, who were brought in not to have their objections answered by reason and argument, but to be borne down with royal authority, the king making himself both party and judge. The proceedings of this conference convinced the

puritan party that they had made a very fallacious calculation, in depending on the king for protection. The puritans were very much dissatisfied with the decisions of the conference, and proposed that, if his majesty would allow them to reply in writing, they would, in the space of a week, give a full answer to any argument or assertion propounded in that conference by any of the prelates. Had this "Solomon of the age," possessed but a moderate share of that wisdom which distinguished David's son from all other monarchs, he might have settled the disputed points so as to have prevented all unpleasant consequences. The bishops would have complied with any moderate measures the king might have proposed; and had it been left discretionary to use or not what both parties admitted were non-essential, the open wounds of the bleeding church might have been healed. But his want of discernment, his love of flattery, and his high arbitrary principles, prompted him to inflict a still deeper wound, the deadly effects of which were felt by his children and children's children.

In the beginning of March, the king published a proclamation commanding all priests and Jesuits to depart the realm. This proclamation was so worded as to show that he did not banish them out of hatred to their religion, but for holding the doctrine of the pope's supreme authority in the civil affairs of other nations. This proclamation was followed by another, giving an account of the conference with the puritans. He there states that

both himself and council were perfectly satisfied that the doctrine and discipline of the Common Prayer-Book were agreeable to the rites and ceremonies of the primitive church,—that the objections of the puritans were frivolous and unsupported,—that there were no grounds for any change, but that himself and council, with consent of the bishops, had so far yielded to meet their scruples as to alter, or rather to explain, some objectionable passages. The proclamation then enjoins all men, ecclesiastical and temporal, to conform to the Book of Common Prayer, as the only public form established in this realm. He commanded the bishops and other ministers to see the proclamation executed, and to punish all offenders according to law. From this proclamation we see how little regard the king paid to either the statute law or the tender consciences of the puritans; and in what a different tone he speaks of “the catholics, who could not comply with the received doctrines of the church of England.”

It appears that neither the decisions of the conference nor the proclamation which followed could fully allay the fears of the church party, lest, at the meeting of parliament, the puritans should attempt some further alterations in the church. The archbishop was so much alive to his apprehensions that he wished he might not live to see the parliament assemble; and in this his desire was granted. On the first Sunday in Lent he went to Whitehall, where the king held a long discourse with him on

the affairs of the church ; and, whilst on his way to dine at the council chamber, he was seized with paralysis. On the Tuesday following the king visited him at Lambeth palace, and told him that he would pray for his life. The dying prelate made several attempts to say something to the king, but his speech failed ; the only words that could be understood, and the last he uttered, were, *pro ecclesia Dei* : “ for the church of God.” He died on the 29th day of February, 1604.

Preparations were now made by the king for calling a parliament, but it was evident, both from his writs and proclamation, that no members would be received but such as accorded with his views. Though his style was studied ambiguity, yet it was easy to learn that such were his ideas of the prerogative that he would have his calling a parliament to be considered more as an act of his kingly condescension than the unalienable right of the subjects. On the 19th of March, the king opened the parliament in person, with the longest and most remarkable speech that was ever delivered from the British throne. It would be a heavy tax on a man's time and patience to read this dry verbose speech, which occupies eighteen pages of closely-printed octavo ; we shall therefore only give an extract or two from it, on those points which relate to religion :—“ At my first coming, although I found but one religion, and that which by myself is professed, publicly allowed, and by the law maintained, yet found I another sort of religion, besides

a private sect, lurking in the bowels of the nation. The first is the true religion, which by me is professed, and by law established,—the second is the falsely called catholic, but truly papist,—the third, which I call a sect rather than a religion, is the puritans and novelists, who do not so far differ from us in points of religion as in their confused form of policy and purity, being ever discontented with the present form of government, and impatient to suffer any superiority, which makes their sect insufferable, in any well-governed commonwealth. But, as to my course towards them, I remit it to my proclamation made upon that subject. And as for the papists, I must put a difference between my private profession of my salvation, and my politic government of the realm, for the weal and quietness thereof. As for my profession, you have me, your head, now among you, of the same religion that the body is of. As I am no stranger to you in blood, no more am I a stranger to you in faith, nor in matters concerning the house of God. And although this my profession be according to my education, wherein I sucked the milk of God's truth with the milk of my nurse, yet do I here protest unto you that I was never violent nor unreasonable in my profession, and should not have so firmly kept my first profession, if I had not found it agreeable to all reason, and to the rule of my conscience. I acknowledge the Roman church to be our mother church, although defiled with some infirmities and corruptions, as the Jews were before they crucified

Christ. And as I am no enemy to the sick man because I would have his body purged from ill humours, no more am I an enemy to their church because I would have them reform their errors, not wishing the down-throwing of the temple, but that it might be cleansed from corruption. My mind was ever so free from persecution, or entralling my subjects in matters of conscience, as I hope those of that profession have a proof, since my first coming, that I was so far from increasing their burdens with Rehoboam, as I have so much as either time or occasion, or law could permit, lightened them. And even now at this time have I been careful to revise and consider deeply upon the laws made against them, that some overture might be made to the present parliament for clearing these laws by reason in case they have been in times past further, or more rigorously extended by judges, than the meaning of the law was, or might tend to the hurt as well of the innocent as the guilty persons."

He then draws a distinction between "the clerics and laics:" the latter he subdivides into two classes, the one quiet and peaceable subjects, and he "would be sorry to punish their bodies for the error of their minds." But of "the clerics" he says, "As long as they hold the doctrine of the pope's supremacy, who not only claims to be the spiritual head of all Christians, but an imperial civil power over all kings and emperors, whom he may dethrone at his pleasure,—discharge

the subject from their allegiance to their sovereign, whose assassination would be no sin, but would rather merit their salvation; such," said he, "cannot be endured whilst they profess allegiance to that three-crowned monarch, or rather monster, their head." He then proceeds to say, "I could wish from my heart it would please God to make me one of the members of such a general Christian union in religion as, laying wilfulness on both hands, we might meet in the midst, which is the centre and perfection of all things. For if they would leave and be ashamed of such new and gross corruptions of theirs as themselves cannot maintain, nor deny to be worthy of reformation, I would on my own part be content to meet them in the midway, so that all novelty might be renounced on either side. For as my faith is the true, ancient, catholic, and apostolic faith, grounded upon the Scriptures, and the express word of God, so will I ever yield all reverence to antiquity in points of ecclesiastical policy, and by that means shall I ever, with God's grace, keep myself from either being a heretic in faith, or a schismatic in matters of policy."

This was not only by far the longest but also the most unpopular speech ever delivered by an English monarch to his parliament. All parties were disgusted with the ambiguity of his verbose harangue. Even his "king-craft," of which he was remarkably proud, failed to deceive them, and many of his tropes, similes, and metonymies, were

turned into jest. The catholics were far from being satisfied with his allowing them a bare toleration. The puritans were extremely mortified at his charging them with being such enemies to the state that they ought not to be tolerated by any well regulated government. The members of the church of England were equally dissatisfied with him for offering to meet the papists half-way. This expression raised such a suspicion in the midst of his best friends, that his subsequent conduct was strictly observed by the house of commons.

Great care had been taken, at the election, to have such a parliament as on all occasions would act with the court. But though some men may be found who for the sake of being in office will lift up either hand as they are directed, yet such mean characters did not form the majority of James's parliament. One of the first acts they passed was to prevent the crown, or any other person, from receiving conveyances of lands belonging to the church. This was to prevent the crown, or any of the needy courtiers from enriching themselves at the expense of impoverishing the church. They also revived the statute of Edward VI., which enacts that all processes, citations, and judgments, in any ecclesiastical court, shall be issued in the king's name, and under the king's seal. The marriages of the clergy were rendered legitimate, by repealing the statute made against them in the reign of Mary..

The convocation which sat at the same time with the parliament was very active against the puritans. The see of Canterbury being vacant by the death of Whitgift, Bancroft, bishop of London, was appointed to preside. Having obtained the king's licence to make canons, he delivered to the lower house a book which he had compiled, containing one hundred and forty-one canons, for their approbation. Whilst the lower house were revising the canons, a petition was presented by the puritan ministers for a reformation of the Book of Common Prayer. The petition was rejected, and the president admonished those who presented it, and their adherents, to be obedient and conform before Midsummer-day, or they should undergo the censures of the church.

The book of canons met with no opposition in the lower house, but in the upper house the use of the cross in baptism was warmly debated. Bancroft and several others zealously defended it, but they were strongly opposed by Dr. Rudd, bishop of St. David's, who manifested a spirit of sympathy and moderation towards the persecuted puritans. An end was put to the debate by the president saying, that he was determined to use the best means he could to bring others to unity and conformity with himself and the rest of his brethren.

The canons introduced by Bancroft passed through both houses of convocation, and were ratified by the king's letters patent under the great seal; but, as they were never confirmed by act of

parliament, the courts of Westminster-hall have pronounced them binding only on the clergy, the laity not being represented in convocation. The hard bearing these canons had upon the noncon-forming part of the community may be seen in the following extract from the ninth canon :—“ Whosoever shall separate from the communion of the church of England, and combine together in a new brotherhood, calling themselves true and lawful churches, and assuming a right to make rules for church government without the king’s authority, and publish that their pretended church has groaned under the burden of certain grievances imposed on them by the church of England, let them be excommunicated *ipso facto*, and not restored.”

Severe as are the consequences of an excommunication in the spiritual courts, the king ratified these canons, and commanded them to “be diligently observed and executed.” And, that none might plead ignorance as an apology for non-compliance, the king commanded every parish priest to read them in his church once every year on a Sunday or holiday, before divine service. The archbishops, bishops, and others having ecclesiastical jurisdiction, are commanded to put them in execution, and inflict the penalties on all those that wilfully break or neglect them. Having passed the book of canons, and granted four subsidies to the king, the convocation was dissolved, and was not convened again for six years.

The king having kept the see of Canterbury vacant nine months, translated Bancroft, bishop of London, to the primacy, and Vaughan, bishop of Chester, to London. Bancroft was the first man who preached the divine right of episcopacy in the church of England, and he was the first subject that attempted to raise the prerogative above the law, by advising the king to make the redressing of grievances entirely dependent on his own will. Never was the court of an English monarch more crowded with fawning flatterers than that of James I.; yet some of his council had the honesty to tell him that the redressing of grievances was the proper business of parliament, and that to act upon what the archbishop proposed would plunge him into insurmountable difficulties. The twelve judges being summoned into the star-chamber to express their opinion upon the archbishop's proposition, gave it as their unanimous opinion that the king could not decide upon such cases.

On Vaughan being elected to the see of London, the French and Dutch ministers within his diocese presented an address requesting his protection and favour, which his grace readily granted. But, whilst protection was afforded to foreign churches, the archbishop was pressing conformity to the rubric and canons in the English church with such unyielding strictness in the use of copes, surplices, caps and hoods, that it gave an entire new face to the reformed religion. By these severe measures, more than three hundred ministers were silenced

or deprived ; some were excommunicated and cast into prison, and numbers left their native land to preserve an approving conscience.

The violent proceedings of the archbishop against the puritans having made a deep impression on the public mind, the king commanded the twelve judges to meet him in council, to answer the three following questions, which were proposed by the king :—First, “Whether the deprivation of puritan ministers by the high commissioners, for refusing to conform to the ceremonies appointed by the last canons was legal. Second, Whether a prohibition be grantable to the commissioners upon the statute, second of Henry V., if they do not deliver the copy of the libel to the party. Third, Whether it be an offence punishable, and what punishment they deserve who framed petitions, and collected a multitude of names thereto, to prefer to the king in a public cause, as the puritans had done, with an intimation to him that if he denied their suit many thousands of his subjects would be discontented.” To these questions the judges replied, first, “That as the king possessed supreme ecclesiastical power, and had delegated that power to the commissioners, they had the power of deprivation by the canon law ; and by the statute of the first of Elizabeth, which appoints commissioners to be made by the queen, it was clear that the king, without parliament, might make orders and constitutions for the government of the clergy, and might deprive them

if they did not obey, and so the commissioners might deprive them." To the second they answered, "That that statute was intended where the ecclesiastical judge proceeds *ex officio et ore tenus*." The third they declared, "was an offence finable at discretion, and very near to treason and felony in the punishment; for it tended to raise sedition, rebellion, and discontent among the people." In this opinion all the lords agreed, by which the whole body of the clergy were entirely deprived of the protection of the statute law of the land. The king might, without parliament, make what constitutions he thought proper,—the high commissioners might proceed upon them *ex officio*, and the subject could not even petition the king for relief without being finable at pleasure, and "coming near the punishment of treason." This was making the king absolute in all ecclesiastical affairs, and was probably intended to open the way for his being so in the state.

No sooner had the archbishop obtained the opinion of the judges, upon the above questions, than he summoned all the clergy of London to Lambeth, to subscribe again to the three articles of Whitgift, according to the terms of the new canon, "that they did it willingly and from the heart." Many of the ministers, knowing what they had to meet, absconded, and so many others refused to subscribe, that a number of churches were shut up for want of preachers. The court had been informed that the number of noncon-

formists was very inconsiderable; but, being now convinced of the contrary, the bishops found it necessary to relax the rigour of the canons for a time, and from some they accepted a promise, in place of an oath to use the cross and surplice,—from others the surplice only,—and from others a verbal promise which left them at liberty to use them or not. The evident design of this indulgence was to serve the church by them at present, until the universities could supply them with a succession, none of whom were to be admitted into orders without a full and absolute subscription to all the articles and canons. The puritan clergy were in general very reluctant to leave the church, and offered to dispute in public the lawfulness of imposing the use of the surplice, the cross in baptism, and kneeling at the sacrament; but their challenge was not accepted. On the failure of the above, an apology was presented to the king in favour of those ministers who were suffering for refusing subscription and conformity.

The proceedings of Bancroft and the high commissioners against the puritans, were of the most cruel kind. Many of their ministers were not only deprived of their livings, and driven from their habitations, but were prevented from emigrating to those countries where they might have enjoyed religious liberty, by a proclamation prohibiting any of his majesty's subjects from leaving the kingdom without a special licence from the king. This malevolent and impolitic

act was suggested by the archbishop, and produced a reaction, the effects of which will occupy a portion of the subsequent pages.

It has been remarked that the Roman catholics fully expected that, when king James ascended the British throne, he would not merely have granted them a toleration, but have placed their privileges on a par with those of the protestants. But the king's speech at the opening of parliament cut off all those high expectations. Their next attempt was to effect by stratagem what they had no chance of obtaining by legitimate means. The Jesuits, under the direction of their superiors, found means to gain attendance among the Scotch presbyterians, the puritan ministers, and the clergy of the church of England, and by their preaching and writings they inflamed the minds of each party against the other. But the movements of this machinery were far too slow for their purpose. To bring the matter to a more speedy close, a scheme was projected of blowing up the king and most of the royal family, together with the chief of the protestant nobility and gentry, on the first day of their assembling in parliament. To effect this purpose, they hired a cellar under the house of lords, in which they deposited thirty-six barrels of gunpowder, and covered them over with coals and faggots. But the diabolical plot was discovered by means of a letter sent to lord Mount-eagle, advising him to absent himself from the house, because they were to "receive a terrible

blow, and not know who hurt them." Mounteagle showed the letter at court, and the king ordered the apartments about the parliament house to be searched. The powder was found in a cellar under the house of lords, and Guy Faux, with a dark lantern in the cellar, ready to set fire to the train when the king should come to the house next morning. Faux at first denied every thing, but at last confessed the plot, and impeached several of his accomplices, eight of whom were tried and executed. One of those who suffered was Garnet, the provincial of the English Jesuits, who was afterwards canonized by the Pope. Had this infernal plot succeeded, the puritans were to have been charged with being the authors, but into the pit they digged for others they were themselves precipitated.

The parliament met on the ninth of November, 1605; the king made a long speech, in which he dilated largely on the horrible plot, and magnified the mercy of God in the miraculous discovery. But the most striking features of this speech are the guarded apology he makes for the papists, and the odium he endeavours to cast upon the puritans. This would be best understood in his own words, which are as follow:—"For, however the blind superstition of their errors in religion has been the only motive in this desperate attempt, it must not be thought that all who profess the Roman religion are guilty of the same. For it is true that many honest men, blinded perhaps with some

opinions of popery, as if they be not sound in the real presence, the number of their sacraments, and some such school questions, do either not know, or not believe at least, all the true grounds of popery, which is indeed the mystery of iniquity. We therefore justly confess that many papists, especially our forefathers, laying their only trust upon Christ and his merits, may be saved, detesting in that point, and thinking that cruelty of puritans worthy of fire that will allow no salvation to any papists."

The court flatterers, who always see things through a medium different from that of other people, praised the speech as being replete with the most profound wisdom, justice, and equity, emanating from his majesty's greatness of soul, in so righteously distinguishing between the innocent and the guilty. But the people, to whom flattery would bring no favour, saw it in another light, and drew a very different conclusion. They saw with deep regret how careful the king was to clear the Roman Catholic religion from encouraging such murderous deeds, whilst he declares "that the cruelty of the puritans is worthy of fire, as they would not allow salvation to the papists;" from which it was inferred that had the explosion taken place, and all the puritans been blown up, there would have been no cause of regret, as they were worthy of fire. The opinion is pretty general that the king's lenity to the catholic conspirators was the effect of a pusillanimous fear; for, as bishop Burnet remarks,

from this time to the day of his death he was always writing and talking against popery, and acting in its favour. As soon as the king had finished his speech he prorogued the parliament until the twenty-first of January, 1606.

One of the first acts on the meeting of parliament in 1606 was the drawing up the oath of allegiance to his majesty as a temporal sovereign, independent of any other power on earth. This oath, which passed both houses of parliament without any opposition, was to be taken by all his majesty's subjects. The king was so much afraid of offending his catholic subjects that he softened down the oath so that no Roman catholic could object taking it, except those who maintained that the pope had power to depose kings, and to dispose of their dominions. Accordingly, Blackwall their superior, and most of the English catholics, submitted to the oath, though the pope prohibited them on pain of damnation. Cardinal Bellarmine wrote against taking the oath under the feigned name of Tortus. This furnished the king with an occasion of publishing his apology, with a preamble addressed to all Christian princes, in which he exonerates himself from the charge of persecuting the catholics, and reproaches the pope with ingratitude, founded, as he says, upon "the free liberty of religion he had granted them,—the honours he had conferre'd on them,—the free access they at all times had to his person,—the general jail delivery of all Jesuits and papists convict,—and the strict orders

he had given his judges not to put the laws in execution against them in future." In this apology, the king gives himself credit for nothing more than what was strictly true; but we think an apology was due to his own subjects for his screening the papists from the penalties of the law, when at the same time he was persecuting his protestant subjects with heavy fines, long imprisonments, and obliging numbers of them to leave their native land, because, from conscientious motives, they could not conform to what the king himself allowed to be a non-essential.

The turn which recent proceedings had taken led the archbishop to conclude that this would be a favourable time for raising the king's prerogative into absolute power; to effect which he again presented his articles to the council. When the judges were consulted on the subject, they unanimously opposed the measure as contrary to law, so that, however the king might be pleased with the archbishop's plan, he thought it most prudent to let it drop.

The king's conduct was daily weakening the confidence and affection of his protestant subjects, in consequence of the marked attention he paid to the interests of the Roman catholics, and the influence they had at court, many of the most important offices of the state being filled by them. Serious apprehensions were entertained by the English protestants that some designs were laid against the Reformation. General dissatisfaction was occasioned by the king licensing a book entitled, "The

Interpreter," written by Cowel, the archbishop's vicar-general, published in 1608, in which it is stated,—First, "that the king was not bound by the laws, or by his coronation oath. Secondly, that the king was not obliged to call a parliament to make laws, but might do it alone by his absolute power. Thirdly, that it was a great favour to admit the consent of the subjects in giving subsidies."

The next parliament met in February, 1610, and in the opening of the session gave proof of a revival of the spirit of English liberty. They spoke of the king's conduct in heaping such favours on the Scotch, and the encroachments he had made on the laws and liberties of the subjects, in terms of unqualified disapprobation. The commons not only manifested a concern for their own privileges, but noticed the oppressive bearings the prerogatives of the crown had, as exercised in ecclesiastical affairs. They reprobated the proceedings in the spiritual courts, in depriving, disgracing, and imprisoning the clergy, beyond what the statute law enjoined, and declared that the high commission court and the oath *ex officio* were hateful, arbitrary, and illegal.

To prevent a repetition of such dangerous speeches, the king summoned both houses of parliament to meet him at Whitehall, where he gave them to understand that if he did not govern by absolute power it was owing entirely to his own moderation. He told them that "the power of kings was like the divine power. For as God can create and destroy, make and unmake at his plea-

sure, so kings can give life and death, judge all, and be judged of none. They can exalt low things, and abase high things, making the subjects like men at chess, a pawn to take a bishop or a knight: And, as it is blasphemy to dispute what God may do, so it is sedition in subjects to dispute what a king might do in the height of his power." He commanded them therefore not to meddle with the main points of government, which would be to lessen his craft, who had been thirty years at his trade in Scotland, and had served an apprenticeship of seven years in England.

The high tone in which his majesty asserted his prerogative raised the independent spirit of Englishmen in the members of the house of commons. Twenty of the members were deputed to present a remonstrance to his majesty against that part of his speech which forbids them debating upon things relating to "the chief points of government." They considered it the undoubted right of the British house of commons to inquire into the grievances of the subject, their own rights and properties, as well as his majesty's prerogative. "They therefore most humbly and instantly beseech his gracious majesty that without offence they may, according to the right and liberty of parliament, proceed in their intended course against the late new impositions." They also presented a petition praying that the laws might be put in force against papists,—that the clergy who had been deprived for not subscribing the articles might be restored,—

that pluralities might be prevented,—and the powers of the court of high commission brought within proper limits; as the manner in which that commission had been executed was grievously oppressive to the subject. With this specimen of the spirit of English liberty the king was extremely dissatisfied, and resolved for the future, if possible, to govern the nation without parliaments. The king was hurried on in his violent measures by archbishop Bancroft, a most bitter enemy both to the papists and puritans. But death put an unexpected end to all his projects; and from the roughness of his temper, his high and arbitrary notions, and his want of hospitality, he was but little beloved whilst living, and not more lamented when dead. He was succeeded by Abbot, bishop of London, a man of so different a spirit and temper, that he was strongly suspected of being a puritan, because he would not persecute that people as his predecessor had done.

At the Hampton-court conference, held in 1603, Dr. Reynolds made the following request to the king:—"May your majesty be pleased that the Bible be new translated, such as are extant not answering the original," of which he gave several examples. Bancroft, bishop of London, opposed the doctor, and said, "If every man's humour may be followed, there will be no end of translating." The king interposed and said, "I profess I could never yet see a Bible well translated in English; but I think that, of all, that of Geneva is the worst.

I wish some special pains were taken for a uniform translation, which should be done by the best learned in both universities, then reviewed by the bishops, presented to the privy council, and ratified by royal authority, to be read in the whole church, and no other." The king having expressed his desire for a new translation, a resolution was passed for carrying his desire into effect, and fifty-four translators were appointed for the accomplishment of this important work. Whether the number was reduced by death, or by some other cause, it is not known; but it appears from Fuller's Church History, book x., that forty-seven only were employed. The whole of the Scriptures were divided into six parts, and the following persons appointed for the execution of each part. The five books of Moses, and to the end of the First Book of Chronicles, at Westminster, by

Dr. Andrews, fellow and master of Pembroke Hall, in Cambridge, dean of Westminster, afterwards bishop of Winchester.

Dr. Overall, fellow of Trinity College, master of Katherine Hall, Cambridge, dean of St. Paul's, afterwards bishop of Norwich.

Dr. Saravia.

Dr. Clarke, fellow of Christ College in Cambridge, preacher in Canterbury.

Dr. Laifield, fellow of Trinity College in Cambridge, parson of St. Clement Danes. Being skilled in architecture, his judgment was much relied on for the fabric of the tabernacle and Temple.

Dr. Leigh, archdeacon of Middlesex, parson of All-hallows, Barking.

Master Burgley, Mr. Thompson, and Mr. Bedwell, of Cambridge, and vicar of Tottenham.

The Second Book of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the song of Solomon, at Cambridge, by

Master Edward Lively.

Mr. Richardson, fellow of Emmanuel College, afterwards D. D., master first of Peterhouse, then of Trinity College.

Mr. Dillingham, fellow of Christ College.

Mr. Andrews, afterwards D.D., brother to the bishop of Winchester, and master of Jesus College.

Mr. Harrison, the rev. vice-master of Trinity College.

Mr. Spalding, fellow of John's College, Cambridge, and Hebrew professor therein.

Mr. Bing, fellow of Peterhouse, Cambridge, Hebrew professor.

The third part, including the four larger prophets, with the Lamentations, and the twelve lesser prophets, at Oxford, by

Dr. Harding, president of Magdalen College.

Dr. Reynolds, president of Corpus Christi College.

Dr. Holland, rector of Exeter College, and king's professor.

Dr. Kilby, rector of Lincoln College, and regius professor.

Master Smith, afterwards D.D., and bishop of Gloucester. He wrote the learned and religious preface to the translation.

The fourth part, including the prayer of Manasseh, and the rest of the Apocrypha, at Cambridge, by

Dr. Duport, prebend of Ely, and master of Jesus College.

Dr. Brainthwait, first fellow of Emmanuel, then master of Gonvil and Caius College.

Dr. Radclyffe, one of the senior fellows of Trinity College.

Master Ward, of Emmanuel, afterwards D.D., master of Sidney College and Margaret professor.

Mr. Downs, fellow of St. John's College, and Greek professor.

Mr. Boyce, fellow of St. John's College, prebend of Ely, parson of Boxworth in Cambridgeshire.

Mr. Ward, regal, afterwards D.D., prebend of Chichester, rector of Bishop-Waltham in Hampshire.

The fifth part, including the four Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and Apocalypse, at Oxford, by

Dr. Ravis, dean of Christ-church, afterwards bishop of London.

Dr. Abbot, master of University College, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury.

Dr. Eedes, Mr. Thompson, Mr. Savill, Dr. Peryn, Dr. Ravens, Mr. Harmer.

The sixth part, including the epistles of St. Paul and the canonical epistles, at Westminster, by

Dr. Barlowe, of Trinity Hall, in Cambridge, dean of Chester, afterwards bishop of Lincoln.

Dr. Hutchenson, Dr. Spencer, Mr. Fenton, Mr. Rabbet, Mr. Sanderson, and Mr. Dakins.

To assist them in this great work, his majesty recommended them to observe the following rules.

1. The ordinary Bible read in the church, commonly called the bishop's Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the original will allow.

2. The names of the prophets and the holy writers, with their other names in the text, to be retained as near as may be, accordingly as they are vulgarly called.

3. The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, viz., as the word church not to be translated congregation.

4. When any word hath divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most eminent fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place, and the analogy of faith.

5. The division of the chapters to be altered either not at all, or as little as may be, if necessity so require.

6. No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words, which cannot, without some circumlocution, so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text.

7. Such quotations of places to be marginally set down which shall serve for the fit reference of one scripture to another.

8. Every particular man of each company to take the same chapter or chapters, and having translated or amended them severally by himself, where he thinks good, all to meet together, confer on what they have done, and agree for their part what shall stand.

9. When any one company hath dispatched any one book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of seriously and judiciously; for his majesty is very careful in this point.

10. If any company, upon review of the book so sent, shall doubt or differ upon any places, to send them word thereof, note the places, and therewithal send their reasons; to which, if they consent not, the difference to be compounded at the general meeting, which is to be of the chief persons of each company, at the end of the work.

11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority to send to any learned in the land, for his judgment in such a place.

12. Letters to be sent from every bishop to the rest of his clergy, admonishing them of this translation; and to move and charge as many as, being skilled in the tongues, have taken pains in that kind, to send his particular observations to the company, either at Westminster, Cambridge, or Oxford.

13. The directors in each company to be the deans of Westminster and Chester for that place, and the king's professors in Hebrew and Greek in each university.

14. The following translations to be used, when they agree better with the text than the bishop's Bible, viz., Tindal's, Matthews's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch, Geneva.

Besides the above directions, three or four of the most ancient and grave divines in either of the universities, not employed in translating, to be assigned by the vice-chancellor, upon conference with the rest of the heads, to be overseers of the translations, as well as for the better observance of the fourth rule above specified.*

After spending four years in this important work, these great and good men had the honour of presenting his majesty with an elegant copy of the new translation of the Bible, printed in folio, in the year 1611. These worthy men are now all gathered to their fathers, but what was said of them by one of their historians is not too much, “ Wheresoever the Bible shall be preached or read in the whole world, there shall also this that they have done be told for a memorial of them.”

The character of a court may be said to give tone to the character of the nation. The court of James was at this period most noted for luxury and diversions. The king was governed by his favourite, who had neither religion nor virtue; his chief qualifications were his youth, beauty, and fine clothes. James was lavish in his expenses, and profuse in his grants to his hungry courtiers, by which he exhausted his exchequer, and was

Dr. A. Clarke, from Fuller's Church History, book x.

obliged to raise money by the most arbitrary and illegal exercise of the prerogative. By pursuing such measures, the king lost the affections of his subjects, and exposed himself to the contempt of foreign powers, who regarded him only as they could turn his imbecile measures to their own advantage. From this time both church and state advanced by rapid strides towards those calamities which broke out in the following reign to the overthrow of both.

Whilst the king and his courtiers were inflicting deep and dangerous wounds on the vitals of the protestant religion and the civil liberties of England, it pleased God to lay the foundation for their recovery by the marriage of the king's daughter Elizabeth to Frederick V., elector palatine of the Rhine, from whom his present majesty, William IV. is descended. The match was promoted by archbishop Abbot, and highly approved of by all the protestant part of the realm, as being the most probable means of securing the protestant succession, in case of a failure of heirs from the king's son. But the celebration of the marriage was postponed for some months by the lamented death of Henry, prince of Wales.

This prince, though upwards of eighteen years of age, and surrounded by so much vice and dissipation, had never been known to commit one act of intemperance, or heard to utter an oath. He had a great mind, filled with just, noble, and elevated sentiments, that viewed all empty trifles

with a contempt equal to the high estimation in which they were held by his father. He had frequently said, that "if ever he mounted the throne, his first care should be to try to reconcile the puritans to the church of England." The jealous king was not unmoved by his son's popularity, and one day asked, with considerable emotion, "Whether his son intended to bury him alive." It is no uncommon thing for the people to ascribe the death of a beloved prince to unfair practices, and it was loudly whispered, in various circles, that the king had caused the prince to be poisoned. This surmise was strengthened by the king commanding that no person should appear at court in mourning for him. That the king's favourite promoted the death of the prince there can be but little doubt, but whether it was known to the king is uncertain. Bishop Burnet says, that "he was assured by Colonel Titus, who had it from the mouth of Charles I., that his brother Henry was poisoned by the earl of Somerset's means."

The first regular sect among the English protestants was the Independents, who about this time assumed that name. Among those who returned to England was a Mr. Robinson, who had been pastor of an English church at Leyden. On his return he formed a congregation which met in the Borough of Southwark, where there is still a chapel, called "Deadman's-place," because there was a burying ground adjoining it. But whether Robinson or a Mr. Jacob was the founder

of the first independent congregation, the Dissenters themselves are not agreed. In 1624, Mr. Jacob went to Virginia, where he soon after died.

In the year 1632, the little society in Deadman's-place were informed against by the bishop's pur-sivant, when forty-two of them were apprehended and cast into prison. Some of the people were admitted to bail, but no favour could be shown to their pastor. After the minister had suffered the rigid severities of several months' imprisonment, he petitioned the king for liberty to quit the kingdom. The king granted his request, and he, with about thirty of his followers, went over to New England. He was succeeded in his pastoral office by Mr. Canne, who wrote the marginal notes on the Bible. Mr. Canne continued for a time to preach in private houses; but, after suffering the rage of persecution for a season, both he and most of his followers fled over to Holland. Notwithstanding the persecution which prevailed against this society, their numbers continued to increase, and the service was kept up in Deadman's-place, until one Sunday, whilst celebrating divine worship, they were seized by the marshal of the king's bench, and committed to prison. Next day they were carried before the house of lords, and accused of denying the king's supremacy in ecclesiastical matters, and with preaching contrary to the act of uniformity. The house, however, did not proceed against them in a summary manner, but dismissed them with a gentle reprimand. The

next sabbath great numbers went to see their meeting-house, and were so pleased with the neatness of the place, and the simplicity of their worship, that they immediately joined their community.

The Independents are so called from their maintaining that each congregation of Christians which meets in one house for public worship is a complete church, has sufficient power to act and perform every thing relating to religious government within itself, and is in no respect subject or accountable to other churches. That the doctrines held by the Independents are as highly Calvinistic as those held by the church of Geneva, will appear from a confession of faith delivered by Mr. Thomas Bradbury, at his ordination in London, July 10th, 1707 :—" Forasmuch as upon these occasions many have taken in hand to set forth a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us, I desire to make the same good profession before many witnesses, and, according to my measure of the gift of Christ, give a reason of the hope that is in me with meekness and fear, and especially at this time, when by fasting and prayer, and laying on of hands, I am to be separated for the work whereunto the Lord hath called me, though I be less than the least of all saints, and am not worthy of this grace, to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

" Art. 1. I therefore declare my belief that the books of the Old and New Testament, which are

commonly received by us, came not by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, and are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness.

“ 2. This, through grace, I will always adhere to as the great rule of my faith and ministry: to this law and testimony I profess to bring every opinion. I here learn what God is, and what he doth. This includes both his nature and glorious perfections; it includes both his eternal unity and trinity of persons.

“ 3. I believe that the Lord our God is one Lord; there is none besides him.

“ 4. I believe there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one. This I would avow as a truth, and adore as a mystery.

“ 5. I believe that this one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is a Spirit, the king eternal, immortal, invisible, from everlasting to everlasting, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, but who will take vengeance on his adversaries, and not at all acquit the wicked.

“ 6. I believe that he created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created; that his government reaches over the whole creation; that his providence extends to all creatures and their actions, and that the foreknowledge of God overrules the corruptions of men.

“ 7. I believe that by one man’s disobedience our natures are not only guilty but impure; and that we lie dead in trespasses and sins.

“ 8. I believe that God made a covenant with our first parents, as the common root of all their posterity, and gave them a righteous law, with this establishment, that he that does these things shall live by them, but in the day that he offended he should surely die.

“ 9. I believe that God resolved to glorify himself, by redeeming some of the lost race; and that he did, from all eternity, predestinate some to the adoption of children, whose names are written in heaven; that this election was free, and it will have a certain issue; that the remnant are saved according to the election of grace, not for the works which they should afterwards do, but according to his own purpose and grace before the world began.

“ 10. I believe that this design will be effectual to the happiness of all those.

“ 11. I believe that the only method of obtaining this happiness was by appointing one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, giving a certain number to him, and setting him forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood for the remission of sins, that God might be just, and yet the elect be saved.

“ 12. I believe in the divinity of our great Lord and Redeemer, that he is over all God blessed for evermore; that he thought it no robbery to be

equal with God. I believe this Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us ;—this is the mystery of godliness, great without controversy, that God was manifested in the flesh. I believe him to be a Teacher come from God ; that he was made a Priest for ever. In all these capacities he is Head of the church and the Saviour of the body, appointed to be the heir of all things ; but more especially Lord over them that are given to him.

“ 13. I believe he went about doing good, delighting to do the will of him that sent him, by the which will we are sanctified ; that he was made a curse for us, suffering in both the parts of his human nature ; that he was the Messiah, who should be cut off to finish transgression, and make an end of sin ; that there is no other name given under heaven whereby men can be saved.

“ 14. I believe that when he had by himself purged our sins, he was buried, and lay part of three days and three nights in the belly of the earth.

“ 15. I believe that God raised him to heaven, loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. I believe he ascended up on high, and is seated on the right hand of God as the Advocate of his people and the Judge of the world.

“ 16. I believe that whom he predestinated them he also called, and whom he has called them he also justifies freely by his grace. The blessed-

ness of this consists in God's imputing righteousness without works. I believe that we lay hold on his mercy by faith, and that not of ourselves, but of the gift of God; that the people of God receive the adoption of sons, and there is a change in the disposition of those who are heirs of the grace of life, owing to free love and almighty power. I believe that the ransomed of the Lord grow in grace, and that he who has begun a good work in them will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. No man shall be able to pluck them out of his hands.

" 17. I believe he is to be worshipped with reverence and godly fear; that we are to own this Lord in societies, and that there is a communion with all that in every place call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, both theirs and ours, and that he will be with them to the end of the world.

" 18. That he hath given us several commands and institutions, which we as Christians are obliged to perform, one of which is baptism in water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. And by eating bread and drinking wine, in remembrance of him, we are to continue steadfast in doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer.

" 19. That in all these parts of worship one is our Master, even Christ, no man having dominion over our faith and liberty.

" That the Christian at his death enters upon

two blessings, a complete purity and satisfying enjoyment; that the spirits of just men are made perfect, see Christ, and know him as themselves are known; and that more perfect felicity will follow the resurrection and universal judgment.

"21. That there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; that Christ hath authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man; that the angels who sinned are delivered into chains of darkness; that both they and the wicked who know not God, nor obey the Gospel of his Son, shall go into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal."

We shall close our account of this sect with a brief statement of their discipline. Their congregations consist of a minister, two deacons, and, in conjunction with them, the whole of the congregation. These form a kind of congregational body, assuming the same power as a general council, *jure divino*. The minister is elected by the people at large, who reserve the right to dismiss him at their pleasure: precedents for which may be found in ancient ecclesiastical history. They also profess to follow the primitive Christians in not publishing the faults of each other until they are excommunicated.

When a man desires to be admitted into church-membership, the minister and deacons confer with him, and inquire into his character with honourable strictness and precision. If the result of the investigation proves satisfactory, he is then re-

quired to give an account, in writing, of his conversion and Christian experience. This account is given to the minister, who, having perused it, desires the candidate to attend the church-meeting next Lord's day. When the service is over in the afternoon, the minister, deacons, and principal members of the congregation meet together in a large pew, called the *table pew*, because it is there they administer the Lord's supper. The candidate is then called upon, and the minister informs the people that he is about to read the Christian experience of A. B. The written document generally contains a confession of his original and actual transgressions against God,—his conviction of guilt on that account,—his desire to embrace the salvation which is revealed in the Gospel. He then relates how he was brought to that state of mind, which is generally through the instrumentality of the preached word. He then expresses his desire to become a member of that particular church, and generally assigns as his reason that he cannot any longer conscientiously abstain from obeying the positive command of Christ, which is binding upon all Christians, to participate in the sacrament of the Lord's supper. As soon as the paper is read, the candidate is desired to withdraw, whilst a consultation is held among the minister and members of the church, to determine whether he be a fit person to be received into church-fellowship. If they approve of him he is called in, and the minister gives him the right hand of fellowship, and

from that time he is considered a member of the church. The admission of new members commonly takes place upon the Lord's day, when the sacrament is administered, and the newly admitted members immediately communicate with the church.

In the summer of 1617, the king paid his first visit to his native country after his accession to the English crown. . The most splendid preparations were made for his reception. The chapel at Edinburgh was adorned after the manner of Whitehall, from which place pictures, and the statues of the twelve apostles, were taken and set up in the chapel for the occasion. But the haughty manner in which the king treated the Scotch, and the effects of his conduct, are subjects more properly belonging to the history of Scotland,—suffice it here to say that both parties were equally dissatisfied with the other.

The king on his return from Scotland passed through Lancashire, where loud complaints were made to him, both by the clergy and civil magistrates, against the strictness of observing the Sabbath in the church of England. He was told that the prohibition of innocent amusements on the Sabbath-days was an insuperable objection to the papists becoming protestants, and became the means of proselyting many protestants to the catholic faith. To remove this ground of complaint, in the following year, 1618, the king published a declaration, called "The Book of Sports." In this

book, which was drawn up by bishop Moreton, it is stated, “ that, for his good people’s recreation, his majesty’s pleasure was that after the end of divine service they should not be disturbed, letted, or discouraged from any lawful recreations; such as dancing, either of men or women; archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any such harmless recreations;—nor from having of May-games, Whitsunales, or morrice dances, or setting up of May-poles, or other sports therewith used, so as the same may be had in due and convenient time, without impediment or let of divine service.” It was also declared that women should have leave “to carry rushes to the church for the decorating of it, according to their old customs,” withal prohibiting “ all unlawful games to be used on Sundays only,—as bear-baiting, bull-baiting, interludes; and at all times the meaner sort of people are prohibited bowling.” The following restrictions were annexed to the declarations : “ First. No recusant, that is, no papist, shall have the benefit of this declaration. Secondly. Nor such as were not present at the whole of divine service. Thirdly. Nor such as did not keep to their own parish churches, that is, puritans.” This declaration was ordered to be read in all the churhches of England ; but a check was put to its publication by archbishop Abbot, who, being at Croydon at the time it was to have been read there, peremptorily forbade it. Had the king insisted upon its being read in all the churches at this time, in all probability it would have pro-

duced the same effects that it did in the following reign.

The king was now rapidly losing the confidence and affection of all his subjects who wished to promote the interests of true religion. The gross immorality of his court was notorious. Oaths and language bordering on blasphemy were used in common conversation, even by the king himself. One of the secretaries of state was a professed papist, and the prince of Wales was on the eve of being married to a daughter of the king of Spain. From these circumstances the people inferred that the king felt very little concerned about the protestant religion. The king found his affairs in such an impoverished state that he was under the necessity of appealing to parliament for supplies, and the peculiar circumstances of his son-in-law, the elector palatine, furnished a favourable pretext. The parliament met in January, 1621, and, though the protestant part of the community had lost all confidence in the king, the parliament determined, if possible, to keep on good terms with him, and readily granted him two entire subsidies, the clergy agreeing at the same time to give him three.

In the dry verbose speech with which the king opened this parliament, when treating on the subject of religion, he said, “There are laws enough already, provided the true intent and execution follow. The maintenance of religion consists in persuasion and compulsion; and, though the latter

method ought never to be used but where the first is unsuccessful, yet error should be under restraint, and neither the Jesuits nor the puritans should be allowed to range at discretion. As touching the rumour which is spread, that I should tolerate religion in respect of the match which hath been long in treaty with Spain for my son, I profess I will do nothing therein which shall not be honourable and for the good of religion, else am I not worthy to be your king; and if any thing break off this match it shall be the cause of religion.—I hope you will trust the wisdom of your king so far, as I will never do one thing in private and another in public; but if, after this my declaration, any shall transgress, blame me not if I see them severely punished."

The parliament having granted the king a large supply of money, to enable him to recover the palatinate for his son-in-law, and not seeing any preparations made for war, the king being wholly occupied with the Spanish match, the commons began to inquire into grievances, when the king immediately sent the lord-treasurer in his name to dissolve the parliament. The commons considered the king's conduct an innovation of their rights, and drew up a remonstrance, representing what they thought necessary at the present crisis, when the affairs of the protestant religion on the continent and the case of his own children were the most desperate. The king was no sooner made acquainted with the tenor of the remonstrance

than he sent a letter to the speaker, forbidding them "to meddle with any thing concerning his government or his son's match,"—asserting his "power to punish any misdemeanors in parliament," and stating that he would "not hear nor answer this remonstrance."

These arbitrary proceedings of the king awakened the spirit of English liberty in the members of the house of commons, who drew up another protestation, and entered it in their journal, in which they assert "that the liberties, privileges, and jurisdiction of parliament are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England." The king being informed of it, called a council, sent for the journal of the house of commons, and tore out the protestation with his own hands.

The fears of the nation for the safety of protestantism were greatly excited by the facilities given to the spread of popery. One of the first acts of the king, after he had dismissed the parliament, was to send an order to all the judges commanding them "that in their several circuits they should discharge all prisoners for church recusancy,—for refusing the oath of supremacy,—for dispersing popish books,—for hearing and saying mass,—or any other point of recusancy which concerned religion only." This indulgence was granted to the catholics, at the request of the Spanish ambassador, notwithstanding what the king had said to the contrary in his speech to the parliament. This

mark of royal favour to the catholics opened the door for a vast influx of Jesuits and other popish missionaries into England. Mass was openly celebrated both in town and country. All the important offices under government were filled either by papists or by those of high church principles who would support the arbitrary measures of the king. These proceedings produced such loud murmurs among the people that they were heard in the court, to silence which the king published a proclamation forbidding his subjects to talk of state affairs.

This unnatural prohibition gave rise to a sermon which was preached before the university at Oxford, by Mr. Knight, of Broadgate-Hall, on 2 Kings xix. 19, in which he advanced the following proposition, "that subordinate magistrates might lawfully make use of force, and defend themselves, the commonwealth, and the true religion in the field, against the chief magistrate, within the following cases and conditions:—1. When the chief magistrate turns tyrant. 2. When he forces his subjects upon blasphemy or idolatry. 3. When any intolerable burdens or pressures are laid upon them. 4. When resistance is the only expedient to secure their lives, their fortunes, and the liberty of their consciences."

The court being informed of the sermon, the vice-chancellor sent for the preacher, demanded his notes, and asked him what authority he had for his assertion? Mr. Knight replied that he had

two authorities, one was Paræus, on the thirteenth of Romans,—but his principal authority was king James, who was sending assistance to the Rochellers against their natural prince. This account was transmitted by the vice-chancellor to bishop Laud, who laid it before the king. Mr. Knight was examined before his majesty and the council, who committed him prisoner to the Gatehouse. Paræus's commentary was condemned to be publicly burnt at the two universities, and at London; and the university of Oxford, in full convocation, passed a decree, "that it was not lawful for subjects to appear offensively in arms against their king on the score of religion, or any other account, according to the scripture." To prevent the effects of free discussion in future, all graduates of Oxford were required to subscribe the above decree; and all persons, before they could be promoted to any degree, were obliged to swear that they not only then condemned and detested the above propositions of Paræus, but that they would "always continue of the same opinion." Was it possible for all the wisdom, learning, and ingenuity of one of the most celebrated universities in the world to devise a more absurd and unreasonable oath? But, however absurd and unreasonable, this oath was administered.

The controversy between the Calvinists and Arminians, which had been secretly working ever since the synod of Dort, broke out about this time in almost every direction, with all the heat

and rancour so peculiar to a party spirit. To put a period to the never-ending disputations on the "Five points," the king prohibited all the ministers in England, under the degree of a bishop or dean, from preaching on the doctrines of predestination, election, and reprobation, or on the universality, efficacy, resistibility, or irresistibility of God's grace ;—from limiting the power or prerogative of sovereigns, and from railing in their discourses against either papists or puritans. Ministers who should offend against any of these injunctions were to be suspended from their office and benefice for a year and a day, and their future case was to be determined by a convocation.

Several of our most respectable historians have confounded two things which have no immediate connexion with each other, namely, Arminianism and popery. The five points of doctrine held by Arminius, and condemned by the Synod of Dort, are the following :—

" 1. That God from all eternity determined to bestow salvation on those who, he foresaw, would persevere unto the end in their faith in Christ Jesus ; and to inflict everlasting punishment on those who should continue in their unbelief, and resist unto the end his divine succours : so that election was conditional, and reprobation in like manner the result of foreseen infidelity and persevering wickedness.

" 2. That Jesus Christ, by his sufferings and death, made an atonement for the sins of all man-

kind in general, and of every individual in particular; that, however, none but those who believe in him can be partakers of the divine benefits.

“ 3. That true faith cannot proceed from the exercise of our natural faculties and powers, nor from the force and operation of free-will, since man, in consequence of his natural corruption, is incapable either of thinking or doing any good thing; and that, therefore, it is necessary, in order to his conversion and salvation, that he be regenerated and renewed by the operation of the Holy Ghost, which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ.

“ 4. That this divine grace, or energy of the Holy Ghost, begins and perfects every thing that can be called good in man, and consequently all good works are to be attributed to God alone; that, nevertheless, this grace is offered to all, and does not force men to act against their inclinations, but may be resisted, and rendered ineffectual, by the perverse wills of impenitent sinners.

“ 5. That God gives to the truly faithful, who are regenerated by his grace, the means of preserving themselves in this state; but that the regenerate may lose true justifying faith, forfeit their state of grace, and die in their sins.”

Nothing can be more clear than that a person may firmly believe the above doctrines without being connected with, or advocating either popery or arbitrary power. It is true that these doctrines were held by the king’s spiritual advisers, Laud, Neile, Montague, and others, as they are this

day by tens of thousands in the church of England, who are more consistently opposed both to popery and arbitrary power than the disciples of Calvin can possibly be, who believe that both the end and the means are fixed by an irrevocable decree.

The king's measures were loudly complained of by those who held the doctrines of Calvin. They charged him with having changed his religious sentiments ; but that charge could not be supported. It is true that he, unasked, employed his pen against the Arminians in Holland ; but it was evidently more out of compliment to prince Maurice, who was on the side of the Calvinists, and to oppose Barneveldt, who was at the head of the Arminians, than from any fixed religious sentiment of his own.

The venerable archbishop Abbot met with a very painful accident about this time. Being in a poor state of health, he went to spend part of the summer in Hampshire. Whilst there he was invited by Lord Zouch to hunt in his park at Bramshill ; and whilst pursuing the game, he shot a barbed arrow from a crossbow at a deer when Peter Hawkins, his lordship's keeper, who was out of the bishop's sight among the deer, received the deadly weapon under the left arm, and in the course of an hour after bled to death. The accident brought such distress to the archbishop's mind that he retired to one of his own alms-houses at Guildford, where he remained until the king sent for him to Lambeth. On an examination of

the case, it was pronounced casual homicide, and the king gave him a royal pardon, saying, "An angel might have miscarried in this sort." On the king being informed of the legal penalties his grace had incurred by the accident, he wrote him a consolatory letter with his own hand, telling him that "he would not add affliction to his sorrow, or take one farthing from his chattels or moveables, which were forfeited by law." But, though the king gave his grace such strong proof of his favour, he very prudently withdrew from the council board, where his influence had long been declining, principally on account of his known attachment to the puritans.

The great encouragement given to popery during the period of the Spanish match had excited general dissatisfaction among all ranks of protestants. Both houses of parliament joined in an address to his majesty, praying "that all Jesuits and popish priests might be commanded to depart the realm,—that the laws might be executed against popish recusants,—that all such might be removed from court, and from within ten miles of London." To this address his majesty returned a most gracious answer, but so devoid of truth that it cannot be read but with astonishment. Among other strong expresions of his attachment to the reformed religion, he says, "I protest before God, that my heart has bled when I have heard of the increase of popery. God is my judge, it hath been as thorns in my eyes, and pricks in my sides,—

it hath been my desire to hinder the growth of popery; and I could not have been an honest man if I should have done otherwise. And this I may say further, that if I be not a martyr I am sure I am a confessor; and in some sense I may be called a martyr, as in the scripture Israel was persecuted by Ishmael by mocking words; and never king suffered more ill tongues than I have done, and I am sure for no cause. I will command all my judges to put the laws in execution against the recusants, as they were wont to do before these treaties; for the laws are still in force, and were never dispensed with by me. God is my judge, they were never so intended by me. Another point I will add concerning the education of their children, of which I have had a principal care, as the lord of Canterbury and others of my council can bear me witness, with whom I have advised about this business; for in good faith it is a shame their children should be bred here as if they were at Rome. So I do grant not only your desire, but more. I am sorry I was not the first mover of it to you, but had you not done it I should have done it myself."

From the tenor of this speech one might have expected the most perfect harmony between the king and his parliament. But his solemn appeals to heaven and his promises to his people were alike devoid of sincerity. He told this parliament that his heart bled within him when he heard of the increase of popery; on the faith of which they presented him with a list of fifty-seven popish

lords and knights who were in public offices of great trust and influence; but not one of them was removed. What dependance might be placed on the king's word will appear from the following fact. Whilst the king was expressing his heart's concern at the increase of popery, he was actually negotiating a marriage for his son with a popish princess, Henrietta Maria, sister to Lewis XIII. of France, and granting greater privileges to the Roman catholics by this treaty than were offered to them in the articles of Spain; and, as a pledge of what they were to receive, a number of popish recusants were released from prison, and the archbishop of Ambrun was permitted to administer confirmation to several thousands, at the door of the French ambassador's house, in the presence of a great concourse of spectators. Gondamar, the Spanish ambassador, in one of his dispatches to the court of Spain, says, "There never was more hope of the conversion of England than at the present; for there are more prayers offered now to the mother than to the Son of God." The treaty of marriage was signed in all its articles, and its consummation delayed only till the arrival of the dispensation from the pope. In the mean time, king James fell sick and died, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, 1625.

The accounts given of the character of king James I. by different historians represent him as the wisest and the weakest, the best and the worst, of monarchs. Probably the truth lies between

those extremes; but where that point should be fixed it is hard to determine. Much credit has been given him for his religion; but what his religion was is not easy to say. It does not appear to have been either the popish or protestant, but a motley mixture of both. It is due to his memory to say that we owe him much for the noble and praiseworthy part he acted in causing a new translation to be made of the Bible, and thereby furnishing his subjects with the most faithful translation of the holy Scriptures that is to be found in any living language. Whilst he professed himself the friend and supporter of the established protestant church, his conduct caused an amazing increase both of popery and puritanism. He valued himself much on what he called kingcraft, which was the most detestable dissimulation, in the practice of which he continued to the end of his life. We leave it for the civil historian to draw his political character, merely remarking, that under no monarch did England ever flourish less than in the reign of king James I.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF CHARLES, I., IN 1625, TO
HIS DEATH IN 1649.

BOTH the civil and religious affairs of the nation were in a most deplorable state when Charles I. ascended the throne of England. Nor was the king's conduct calculated to improve either; for he was guided in all his measures by the most corrupt ministers that ever sat in the council chamber of an English monarch. The most of them were professed papists, and the rest were so devoid of religious principle as to vacillate with the changing times. The king having married the princess Henrietta of France, she arrived in England a few days before the meeting of the first parliament. As the most unrestricted liberty for the exercise of the Roman catholic religion was secured to her in the marriage articles, she was accompanied by a numerous train of popish priests, and others of that persuasion.

The king was aware that fears were generally entertained of his attempting to re-establish popery in the land. To allay those fears, in the opening speech to his first parliament he said, "Because some malicious men may, and, as I hear, have given out that I am not so true a keeper and maintainer of the true religion that I profess, I

assure you that I may with St. Paul say, that I have been trained up at Gamaliel's feet, and though I shall never be so arrogant as to assume unto my self the rest, I shall so far show the end of it that all the world may see that none hath, nor ever shall be, more desirous to maintain the religion I profess than I shall be."

The king's professed attachment to the protestant religion, and determination to give it his support, did not prevent the two houses of parliament from petitioning his majesty against popish recusants. In their petition, they point out the principle causes of the increase of popery, and then suggest what they conceive would be the most efficient remedies. The causes are, 1. The want of a due execution of the laws against Jesuits, seminary-priests, and popish recusants. 2. The interposing of foreign princes, by their ambassadors and agents, in their favour. 3. The great concourse of papists, and their frequent conferences and conventicles in the city. 4. Their open resort to the houses and chapels of foreign ambassadors. 5. The education of their children in foreign seminaries. 6. The very great want of proper instruction in the true religion throughout the realm. 7. The licentious printing and circulating of popish books. 8. The employing men in places of government who are ill affected towards the protestant religion, and give countenance and support to the popish party."

To counteract the evils complained of they pro-

posed the following remedies:—“ 1. That the youth of the kingdom be carefully educated under protestant schoolmasters, who shall catechize and instruct their pupils in the principles of the true religion.” His majesty promised that this should be done, and that letters should be sent to the two archbishops to that effect. “ 2. That the ancient discipline of the universities be restored, being the famous nurseries of literature and virtue.” The king expressed his approbation of this, and promised that the chancellor of the university should see it executed. “ 3. That special care be taken to enlarge the word of God throughout the realm, by his majesty advising the bishops to reduce to the peaceable and orderly service of the church, by kind and fatherly treatment, such able ministers as had been silenced; and that non-residency, pluralities, and commendams may be moderated.” The king’s answer to this was, that his majesty liked it well, “ so that it be applied to such ministers as are peaceable, orderly, and conformable to the church government,—that no man should be allowed more than two benefices, which were to be within thirty miles of each other,—that the canon for non-residence should be put in execution, and commendams should be sparingly granted;” but his majesty recommended the parliament to provide a competent maintenance for an able minister in every parish. “ 4. That provision might be made against sending children to foreign popish seminaries, and for recalling those that were there.”

His majesty promised that this should be put in execution. “5. That no popish recusant be permitted to come to court but upon special occasion, according to the statute 3 Jac.” His majesty promised that in this also the law should be executed. “6. That the laws now standing in force against Jesuits, seminary-priests, and all others who have taken orders by authority derived from the see of Rome, be put in execution,—that a certain day be fixed by proclamation for their final departure out of the realm,—that no man suspected of popery shall be a keeper of any of his majesty’s prisons.” All these his majesty promised without exception. “7. That no natural-born subject, nor strange bishops, nor any other by authority from the see of Rome, confer any ecclesiastical orders, or exercise any ecclesiastical function upon your majesty’s subjects.”—His majesty answered that it should be so published by proclamation. “8. That your majesty’s learned council may have orders to consider of all former grants of recusants’ lands that may be avoided or are avoidable by law.”—To this his majesty consented, and promised that it should be done as was required. “9. That your majesty command all your judges and officers of justice to see the laws against popish recusants duly executed, and that the censure of excommunication be declared and executed against them.”—The answer to this was, “The king leaves the laws to their course, and will order the excommunications as desired.” “10. That all popish recusants legally

convicted, or justly suspected, be disarmed."—To this his majesty replied, "The laws in this case shall be duly executed." "11. That, in respect to the great resort of recusants to and about London, his majesty will be pleased to command them to retire to their own countries, and be confined within five miles of their habitation."—The king promised that the laws on this point should be put in execution. "12. That none of your majesty's natural-born subjects go to hear mass at the houses or chapels of foreign ambassadors."—The king gave his assent to this article, and promised to give orders accordingly. "13. That all such insolences as any that are popishly affected have or shall commit, to the dishonour of the protestant religion, shall be exemplarily punished."—His majesty promised that this should be done as was desired. "14. That the statute of 1 Eliz., for the payment of twelve-pence by such as were absent from divine service in the church without a lawful excuse, be put in execution."—The king admitted that it was right that the statute should be executed, and promised that the penalties should not be dispensed with. "15. That your majesty will extend your princely care to Ireland, that the like courses may be taken there for establishing the true religion."—His majesty's answer was that he would do all that a religious king could do in that affair.

The value of the promises made by king Charles may be estimated from the following facts. The

above promises were made to both houses of parliament within six months after he had engaged to set all Roman catholics at liberty, and to suffer no search or molestation of them for their religion, and had in consequence pardoned twenty Romish priests. It is true the king sent a letter to the archbishop to proceed against popish recusants, and a proclamation was published to recall the English youth from popish seminaries; but it was not the king's intention that these should be acted upon, for on the following day he released eleven Romish priests out of prison by his own special warrant, and continued numbers of the nobility and gentry of that religion in offices of trust. The titular bishop of Chalcedon appointed a popish vicar-general and archdeacons all over England. Such were the discrepancies between the gracious promises and the actual performances of Charles I., that we are not at all surprised that the commons and the court should be mutually dissatisfied with each other.

The king called a new parliament, which met in February, 1626; but, in the spirit of the former, they began with inquiring into grievances, and preferring charges against the prime minister, the duke of Buckingham. This parliament appointed a committee for religion, being the first we read of in the house of commons, of which Mr. Pym was chosen chairman. Mr. Montague, one of the king's chaplains, had published two books, one entitled "A new gag for an old goose," and the other

“An appeal to Cæsar.” The committee reported on these books that one of them was an attempt to reconcile England with the church of Rome, and the other to advance the king’s prerogative above the law, and alienate the king’s affection from his most loyal subjects. This investigation was far from pleasing the king; however, the business was closed by binding the author in a recognizance of two thousand pounds for his appearance.

About this time, 1627, the public mind was greatly agitated by the never-ending disputation between the advocates of particular and general redemption. A proclamation was published, said to have been procured by bishop Laud, prohibiting any one from writing or preaching on the five disputed points. The Calvinistic party complained loudly against this proclamation, by which the works of their authors were stifled in the press, whilst the books written by papists and Arminians were allowed to circulate through the kingdom.

A similar prohibition was laid upon all books against popery. Those passages in which the pope was called antichrist, or the church of Rome no true church, or which contained any thing tending to expose her rites or ceremonies, were to be expunged, as being offensive to the queen and her Roman catholic friends.

The king, having dismissed the parliament before sufficient supplies had been granted to support the war, called upon the people to lend such sums as the council was pleased to assess them with. To

convince the people that it was their duty to submit to the loan, he employed such of the clergy as would lend themselves to preach up the doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance, and to prove that the absolute submission of subjects to the royal will was the doctrine of holy scripture. One of the most remarkable sermons of this description was preached by Dr. Sibthorp, during the assizes at Northampton. In this sermon it is asserted, "that if princes command any thing which subjects may not perform because it is against the laws of God, or of nature, or impossible to perform, yet subjects are bound to undergo the punishment without either resisting, or railing, or reviling, and so to yield a passive obedience where they cannot exhibit an active one." The king was highly delighted with the sermon, and sent it to archbishop Abbot, with an order for him to license it. But the archbishop had too much good sense and honesty to sanction by his authority the doctrine which it advocated. The sermon was then sent to Laud, bishop of London, who licensed and recommended it as "a sermon learnedly and discreetly preached, agreeable to the ancient doctrine of the primitive church, both for faith and good manners, and to the established doctrine of the church of England." The king was so offended with the archbishop for refusing to license the sermon, that he suspended him from all his archiepiscopal functions, which were performed by a commission of five bishops, of whom Laud was the chief. The

archbishop was banished to his own house at Ford, an unhealthy place beyond Canterbury.

Both the civil and ecclesiastical affairs of the nation were conducted by the king and council in the most arbitrary manner during the interval of parliament. The king, having involved himself in a war with France, found himself under the necessity of calling another parliament, to furnish him with the means of meeting its expenses. The parliament, having voted his majesty a liberal supply, earnestly solicited him to sign "the petition of right," which consisted of certain claims contained in Magna Charta. The king was very reluctantly brought to give his assent to the petition, which raised the indignation of the leading members of both houses of parliament against his majesty's advisers. A charge was preferred in the house of lords against Dr. Manwaring for the sentiments he had advanced in a sermon preached at Whitehall, and published by his majesty's special command. Among other objectionable passages was this,— "that the king is not bound to observe the laws of the realm concerning the rights and liberties of the subjects, but that his royal will and command in imposing loans and taxes, without common consent in parliament, doth oblige the subjects' conscience, upon pain of eternal damnation; that those who refused to pay this loan offended against the law of God and the king's supreme authority, and became guilty of impiety, disloyalty, and rebellion." The doctor was brought to the bar of the house,

when their lordships passed upon him the following sentence:—That he make a public submission at the bar of each house of parliament,—be imprisoned during pleasure,—pay a fine of a thousand pounds,—be suspended from his ministry for three years,—be disabled for ever from preaching at court,—and incapacitated for holding any ecclesiastical dignity or secular office,—and that his sermons be burnt in London and both universities. Pursuant to this sentence, Manwaring appeared upon his knees at the bar of the house, and made an ample acknowledgment and submission, craving pardon of God, the king, the parliament, and the whole commonwealth, in words dictated by a committee.

However offensive the condemned sentiments in the sermon might be to the people, it is evident they were not displeasing to the king; for no sooner had he dissolved the parliament than he pardoned Manwaring,—remitted his fine,—and preferred him to the valuable living of Stamford-Rivers, with a dispensation to hold St. Giles' in the Fields. He subsequently promoted him to the deanery of Worcester, and in a short time after to the bishopric of St. David. Dr. Sibthorp was made prebendary of Peterborough, and rector of Barton Latimer, in Wiltshire; and Montague was promoted to the bishopric of Chichester, whilst lying under the censure of parliament. At his consecration at Bow church, Mr. Jones, a stationer of London, stood up and excepted against his qualification for a bishopric, because the parliament

had voted him incapable of any preferment in the church; but his exception was overruled, not being delivered in by a proctor, notwithstanding that Mr. Jones averred he could not prevail with any one to appear for him, though he offered to pay the fees.

The affairs of the state, both civil and religious, were now conducted in such a high and arbitrary manner as produced that political tornado which overthrew the throne, and buried in its ruins him that sat upon it. The conduct of the court in promoting to valuable livings in the church Mawwaring and others, who had been left under such strong censure, was warmly denounced by the next parliament, which met in 1628. In the parliamentary debates upon religion during this session, there was the same strange association of Arminianism and popery which has already been exposed, though they have not the least connexion with each other. Thus Oliver Cromwell, who was on the committee of religion this session, presented a complaint to the house against Neile, bishop of Winchester, for giving encouragement "to divines who preached Arminian and popish doctrines,"—and added, "If this be the way to church preferment, what may we expect!" Several warm and angry speeches were made in the course of the debate against the rites and ceremonies of the church, when the candour of the house of commons was expressed by subscribing to the following vow:—"We, the commons in parliament now assembled, do claim, pro-

test, and vow for truth, the sense of the articles of religion which were established by parliament in the 13th year of our late queen Elizabeth, which by public act of the church of England, and by the general and current exposition of the writers of our church, have been delivered unto us. And we reject the sense of the Jesuits and Arminians, and all others wherein they differ from us."

The objections every impartial person is likely to raise against a British senate entering into such a vow will in part be removed by adverting to the indiscreet manner in which bishop Laud was administering the affairs of the church. The general feeling of the nation was in favour of the puritanical form of worship, which rendered the pompous rites and ceremonies introduced at this time very unpopular. Orders were given for the churches to be beautified with pictures, paintings, images, and altar-pieces, which induced many to believe that the day was not very distant when the superstitions of the church of England would not be distinguishable from those of the church of Rome. Nor were these the wild apprehensions of the lower orders of society. One of the daughters of the earl of Devonshire, having turned catholic, was asked by Laud what was her reason for so doing. She replied, "I hate to travel in a crowd; and I perceive that your lordship and many others are hastening towards Rome, and, to prevent being crowded, I have gone before them." There is reason to believe that the infallible pontiff was not without hope of regaining

ing his authority in England. To effect this an offer was twice made to Laud of a cardinal's hat, but he declined the offer by saying, that something dwelt within him which would not suffer his compliance till Rome was other than it is. There is little doubt but the genius of Laud's religion bore a near affinity to that of the pope, from the very great stress he laid upon uniform conformity to creeds and the decrees of councils, the pomp and ceremony he affected in the forms of worship, and the superstitious regard which he paid to days, meats, and garments. But, although we must admit that there were many objectionable traits in the character of Laud, yet, in the absence of facts to support the charge, we cannot join with the many who assert that it was his intention to re-establish popery in England. But it was common with many of the best writers of that period to confound high church principles and Arminianism with popery.

The dark cloud which had long been gathering over the affairs of England daily became more dense and lowering. The king, with the advice of his council, governed the nation without a parliament. Large sums of money were raised by the most galling and arbitrary means. The Star-chamber inflicted exorbitant fines for the most trivial offences. The people were perpetually called upon for loans, benevolences, and free-gifts. Nor could any man open his mouth against these proceedings without hazarding his liberty and

estate. Bishop Laud governed the church by means equally arbitrary and illegal. He rigorously bore down all who opposed him, without any regard to the rights of conscience, the laws of the land, or the canons of the church. All his ecclesiastical proceedings were founded upon the ideas of church government which he had derived from the early fathers of the Romish church, whose object was to free the clergy from all subordination to the civil power.

About this time a number of pious gentlemen and clergy made an attempt to promote a more efficient supply of preaching in the country, by establishing lectures in market towns. They formed themselves into a kind of corporate body, and the trustees bought all the impropriations they could meet with among the laity, to the amount of six thousand pounds, to furnish salaries for the preachers. The people were highly pleased with the project, but it gave great umbrage to the court party, as most of the lecturers were either non-conformists or those who had been silenced for refusing to subscribe to the articles. The attorney-general was directed to proceed against the trustees, as an unlawful society, having formed themselves into a body corporate without a grant from the king, and the impropriations were confiscated to his majesty's use. But these furious proceedings of Laud opened the breach wider every day between the people, the church, and the crown, which at length terminated in the destruction of the king and the overthrow of both church and state.

On the death of archbishop Abbot, which took place at his palace at Croydon, August 4th, 1623, Laud was translated to the primacy, and felt all the importance of having none but the king above him. One of the most acceptable acts of his primacy was the promotion of Dr. Juxton to succeed him in the diocese of London. Laud exerted all his archiepiscopal power in opposing every thing that he thought at all favourable to the puritans, however excellent it might be in itself. To prevent those pious ministers who had scruples of mind about the ceremonies from receiving the support which some of them had as lecturers and domestic chaplains, he would not allow one to be ordained that had not a benefice, curacy, or fellowship, or who lived at the university at his own expense. Galling as was this act to the people in general, on account of the bearing it had upon the puritans, there was another part of his conduct which gave equal offence to all serious people, whether in or out of the church. This was the encouragement he gave to revels, May-games, and sports on the sabbath days. Complaint having been made by the magistrates to the judges on the western circuit, of the peace being broken by revels, sports, and church-ales on the Lord's days, they made an order at the assizes for suppressing them, and appointed the clerk to leave copies of the order with every parish minister, for him to publish it twice in his church yearly. The next time the judges went their circuit, an inquiry was

instituted respecting the execution of their order, when some were punished for disobedience. The archbishop, being informed of their proceedings, complained to the king of the judges having invaded the episcopal jurisdiction, and prevailed with his majesty to summon them before the council. When they appeared, chief justice Richardson, who was one that made the order, pleaded that they had only complied with the unanimous request of the whole bench of magistrates, and justified their proceedings from numerous precedents in the two preceding reigns. But the pleading of law and precedents amounted to nothing with Laud. The chief justice was severely reprimanded, and peremptorily commanded to revoke the order at the next assizes. The chief justice was a man of fine feelings, and had formed a correct estimate of the importance of public morals. The severe reproof he received, and the immoral tendency of the order he had to execute, were almost more than he could bear; and, on leaving the council chamber, he told the earl of Dorset, with tears, "That he had been miserably shaken by the archbishop, and was like to be choked with his lawn sleeves."

The humbling of the chief justice did not satisfy the aspiring spirit of Laud, but he wrote to the bishop of Bath and Wells to know how the people in Somersetshire stood affected towards Sunday revels, &c., and stating that his majesty was displeased with Richardson for suppressing them, and

had directed him to revoke his order. We give the following extract from the bishop's reply, not for its morality, but for its singularity, as coming from a Christian bishop. He affirmed "that the late suppression of the revels was very unacceptable, and that the restitution of them would be very grateful to the gentry, clergy, and common people,—that the same sentiment had been expressed by seventy-two of his clergy, in whose parishes these feasts are kept, and believes that if he had sent for a hundred more he should have had the same answer from them all; but these seventy-two are like the seventy-two interpreters that agreed so soon in the translation of the Old Testament into Greek." The bishop recommends the recreations referred to as being analogous to the feasts of charity held by the primitive Christians, and tending to harmonize their differences and promote love and unity. What an awful picture is here presented ! The metropolitan, his bishops and clergy, pleading for the profanation of the sabbath by public sports, as being the best means of promoting love and unity among neighbours ! The magistrates petitioning the king for their suppression, because of the riotous tippling, contempt of authority, quarrels, and murders they were the means of producing ;—the judges of the land violently persecuted for interposing their authority to suppress such enormities.

To put an end to all controversy on the subject, the archbishop prevailed on his majesty to repub-

lish his father's declaration concerning lawful sports to be used on Sundays after divine service, which was done with the following addition:—
“Out of a like pious care for the service of God, and for suppressing those humours that oppose truth, and for the ease, comfort, and recreation of his majesty's well-deserving people, he doth ratify his blessed father's declaration, the rather because of late, in some counties of the kingdom, his majesty finds that, under pretence of taking away an abuse, there hath been a general forbidding, not only of ordinary meetings, but of the feasts of the dedication of churches, commonly called wakes; it is therefore his will and pleasure that these feasts with others shall be observed, and that all neighbourhood and freedom with man-like and lawful exercises be used; and the justices of the peace are hereby commanded not to molest any in their recreations, having first done their duty to God, and continuing in obedience to his majesty's laws.”

The bishops and clergy, having by royal authority opened the door for sabbath-day amusements, with a general invitation to the people, the nation was soon inundated with a desolating flood of licentiousness. The court had their balls, masquerades, and plays on the Sunday evenings; whilst all the sober and religious people in the country were horrified at the noise of the youth at their May-games, morrice-dances, and revels, which echoed from parish to parish. But the revival of

this iniquitous declaration fell grievously upon the conscientious clergy. Many poor clergymen strained their consciences in submission to their superiors. Some, immediately after publishing it, read the fourth commandment, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," and then solemnly reminded the people that this was the law of God; the other the injunction of man. Some left it to their curates; whilst great numbers refused to comply upon any terms whatever. It would be endless to relate all the persecutions, suspensions, deprivations, and excommunications, which took place among the clergy during the seven years that this act was in operation, as upon a moderate calculation they would not amount to less than from seven to eight hundred.

Every means that ingenuity could devise was resorted to for the purpose of suppressing puritanism. But these, like most other violent measures, produced a re-action, and the puritan party gathered strength in proportion to the severity of their sufferings. The spirit under which the court party acted may be clearly seen in the following facts. There was a collegiate church in the city of Salisbury, called St. Edmund's, which, with its revenues, came by act of parliament into the hands of Henry VIII., and remained in the crown until it was sold to a private person by James I. It was afterwards bought and sold several times, till at last it was purchased by the parishioners, who repaired it for the parish church. The old painted

windows, which were intended to represent the history of the creation by God the Father, in the form of an old man, had been preserved. The painter had betrayed great ignorance of his subject, by representing on one day the work which was done on another. He had painted an old man with a pair of compasses in his hand, to represent his creating the sun and moon; and as sitting to denote the rest of the Sabbath. Henry Sherfield, the recorder, called a vestry and represented the blunders of the painter to the parishioners, who agreed that the painted glass in one of the small windows should be taken out, and plain glass put in its place. Accordingly, a glazier was sent for, and the recorder, pointing to the glass that was to be changed, broke some of the squares with his stick. Upon this the attorney-general exhibited an information in the Star-chamber against Sherfield, founded upon the canons which prohibited any private person from altering any thing in the fabric or ornament of a church, without special licence from the king or bishop of the diocese. Sherfield was charged with being ill-affected to the discipline and government of the church of England, and it was stated that he, with others of the same opinion, by the mere order of the vestry, and in contempt of the king and the bishop, had broken the windows of St. Edmund's church, containing excellent pictures of the creation, which were a great ornament to the church.

Sherfield, in his defence, stated, that the church

of St. Edmund's was a lay-fee, and had been ever since it came to the crown, and consequently that it was not under the jurisdiction of the bishop,—that those who had bought the church had as legal a right to alter the windows as they had to alter the steeple, walls, and pulpit, which they had done without being complained of by the bishop,—that he had only taken down some small squares of glass to show the glazier what was to be done, which did not break the history of the creation,—that the painting was very poor, and did not cost above forty shillings. He then proved, by acts of parliament, passed in the reigns of Edward VI. and Elizabeth, that all pictures were to be removed out of the churches. He denied being ill-affected to the government of the church, or having acted in contempt of either the king or the bishop. The bishop of London said that he would not undertake to justify the errors of the painter, but that God being called the Ancient of Days, might suggest to the artist's mind the idea of representing God the Father like an old man; and that Sherfield was much more to blame for attempting an alteration without licence. The earl of Dorset replied that the Scripture cited by the bishop, in which God the Father is called the Ancient of Days, means God from eternity, and not God pictured like an old man with a pair of compasses. But the Star-chamber was at that time a court in which neither acts of parliament, reason, nor scripture had much weight; for Sherfield was sentenced

to pay a fine of five hundred pounds,—to be removed from his recordership,—imprisoned in the Fleet, and bound to his good behaviour.

In the year 1634, Mr. Prynne, a barrister of Lincoln's-inn, published a large folio volume, entitled *Histriomastix*. The principal object of the author was to show the unlawful, immoral, and antichristian tendency of stage-plays, balls, masks, &c., and the reflections he introduced were construed by some of the court party as if intended to censure the conduct of the king, the queen, and the church, for tolerating such vices. He evidently endeavours to show that the countenancing of such conduct reduced the religion of Jesus Christ to a level with paganism, and tended to pave the way for the re-establishment of popery. For publishing this work Prynne was brought to his trial before the council in the Star-chamber. The trial lasted three days, when the following severe sentence was passed upon the injured author:—"That he be disqualified from practising his profession, and degraded from his degree in the university of Oxford, that his book be burnt by the common hangman,—that he stand in the pillory, and have both his ears cut off,—that he be imprisoned during life, and pay a fine of five thousand pounds,—that Michael Sparks, the printer and publisher, pay a fine of five hundred pounds,—and that Mr. Buckner, the chaplain who licensed the book, pay a fine of fifty pounds." These violent measures of the court against the dissenters, instead of reducing their

numbers as was intended, produced an opposite effect; for the people witnessing such unjust punishments inflicted upon honest, peaceable, and loyal subjects, their cause was espoused by great numbers of the most respectable part of the community, whilst the interest of the king was daily declining throughout the nation.

The arbitrary manner in which the king conducted the affairs of the state, and the despotic conduct of archbishop Laud in his government of the church, tended to accelerate the overthrow of both. The king was imposing heavy taxes upon the people, without convening a parliament, and inflicting the severest penalties on those who resisted his unlawful demands. The most remarkable prosecution for refusing to pay the imposed tax called *ship-money* was that of a Mr. Hampden, of Buckinghamshire, who was charged twenty shillings, but chose rather to risk a trial at law than pay what he conceived an illegal tax. This cause came on for trial in November, 1636, and was argued till Christmas. In May, 1637, it was resumed, and in June the counsel on both sides, having exhausted their arguments, the judges gave judgment against Mr. Hampden, who was compelled to pay the sum with which he had been taxed.

About this time, 1637, the archbishop gave vent to his malevolent feelings against Dr. Williams, bishop of Lincoln, and Mr. Osbaldeston, master of Westminster-school. Through the intercession of Dr. Williams, king James raised Laud to a bishop-

ric; but, on the accession of king Charles, Laud got bishop Williams dismissed from all his offices at court, upon which he withdrew to his diocese, when by close attention to its concerns, and his kindness to the clergy, he became very popular. He frequently entertained them at his table, and on one occasion, when giving his opinion on the new ceremonies, he said that the puritans were the king's best subjects,—and that the king once told him he would treat them more mildly for the future. Laud, being informed of this conversation, caused an information to be lodged against him in the Star-chamber, for revealing the king's secrets. This charge not being well-supported, a new bill was exhibited against him for tampering with the king's witnesses; but although this charge was no better substantiated than the other, his lordship was suspended in the high commission court from all his offices and benefices,—was fined ten thousand pounds to the king, and one thousand pounds to Sir J. Mounson, and sentenced to be imprisoned in the Tower during the king's pleasure. In execution of this severe sentence, the bishop was taken from the bar to the Tower,—all his goods and chattels, to an immense value, were plundered and sold to pay the fine,—his library was seized, and all his private papers and letters examined. Among his papers were found two or three letters written to him about five years before by Mr. Osbaldeston, containing some dark and obscure expressions, which the jealous archbishop interpreted

against himself and the lord treasurer Weston. Upon the obscure expressions in these letters, a new bill was exhibited against the bishop for divulging scandalous libels against the king's privy counsellors. His lordship replied that he did not remember his having received the letters, and was sure he had never divulged them, because they were still among his private papers. But all that the bishop could say availed him nothing; for he was sentenced to pay another fine of eight thousand pounds to the king, and three thousand to the archbishop, for the non-payment of which he was kept close prisoner in the Tower till the meeting of the long parliament.

Mr. Osbaldeston was charged "with plotting with the bishop of Lincoln to divulge state news, and to breed a difference between the lord treasurer Weston and the archbishop of Canterbury, as long as the year 1633." The information was founded upon the letters before mentioned, in which he reports a misunderstanding between the great leviathan and the little urchin. And though the counsel for the defendant absolutely denied any reference to the archbishop, and named the persons alluded to in the letter, yet the court fined him five thousand pounds to the king and five thousand to the archbishop,—to be deprived of all his spiritual dignities and promotions,—to be imprisoned during the king's pleasure, and to stand in the pillory in the dean's yard before his own school, and have his ears nailed to the pillory. Mr.

Osbaldeston, who was among the crowd in the court when this sentence was pronounced, immediately went home to his study at Westminster school, and having disposed of his papers he absconded, leaving a note on his desk in which was written, "If the archbishop inquire after me, tell him I am gone beyond Canterbury." When the messengers arrived at his house, they found the note, and immediately sent to the sea-ports to apprehend him; but he concealed himself in a private house in Drury-lane till the meeting of the long parliament; however, all his goods and chattels were seized and confiscated.

Such violent proceedings were so far from serving the interests of either church or state, that they roused the resentment of all ranks against the men in power, who, without the shadow of law or justice, could so cruelly persecute the most pious, unoffending, and loyal of his majesty's subjects. The king and his council became alarmed at seeing so many of the laity with their families leave the kingdom, and carry their trades into Holland or New England, to prevent which they published a proclamation, prohibiting any person leaving the kingdom without a licence from the commissioners of the plantations, and a testimony from the parish minister of their having conformed to the orders and discipline of the church, and that no clergyman should transport himself beyond the seas, without a testimonial from the archbishop of Canterbury and the bishop of London.

The affairs of the nation daily became more alarming, so that the king found himself under the necessity of calling a parliament, to enable him to obtain means for carrying on the war with Scotland. The two houses met according to their summons, in April 1640, when his majesty, in a short speech, said, "that there never was a king who had a more great and weighty cause to call his people together than himself; but he would not trouble them with particulars, having informed his lord keeper, and commanded him to speak, and desire their attention. The king's anticipations from his parliament were far from being realized; for the spirit of opposition to the proceedings of the court was so general throughout the nation that very few members were returned who were at all favourable to the court politics. But the house of commons, though composed chiefly of what is termed the opposition, were sober and dispassionate men, and as lord Clarendon says, "exceedingly disposed to please the king and do him service." The king acquainted the house, by the lord keeper, Finch, that he was determined to punish the Scots for their rebellious conduct, and expected their immediate assistance, after which he would give them time to consider of any just grievances to be redressed. But the commons, instead of beginning with the subsidy bill, appointed committees for religion and grievances; when the king finding them not disposed to grant him an immediate supply, dissolved the

parliament without passing a single act, and committed several of the leading members to prison.

His majesty, having failed to receive a supply from parliament, had recourse to another unconstitutional means. The archbishop had, under the authority of the great seal, opened the convocation the day after the parliament met, "empowering the two houses to consult and agree upon the explanation or amendment of any canons then in force, or for making such new ones as should be thought convenient for the government of the church." This commission was only to remain in force during the present session of parliament; and, by a remarkable clause which it contained, nothing could be transacted but in the presence of the archbishop. The king having favoured the clergy with special marks of his confidence, the convocation voted him six subsidies, to be paid in six years, at the rate of four shillings in the pound. The archbishop introduced a canon to prevent the spread of popery, to which a clause was appended enacting that the pains and penalties against popish recusants should be equally enforced against all sects and separatists who refused to attend the ordinances of divine worship in their parish churches.

The commission for making and amending canons was to expire with the cessation of parliament, which the king having abruptly dissolved, and granted a new commission to continue the convocation during his majesty's pleasure. The king's

authority to continue the convocation during the recess of parliament being called in question, the case was submitted to the judges, who gave it as their opinion, "that the convocation, being called by the king's writ under the great seal, doth continue in force till it be dissolved by writ or commission, notwithstanding the dissolution of parliament." With the new commission, the king sent a message by the secretary of state, saying, that it was his royal pleasure that none of the prelates or clergy should withdraw from the synod, or convocation, till the affairs they had in command from the king were finished. On receiving this royal command the synod resumed their sittings, which were continued more than a month, making canons, granting subsidies, and enjoining oaths without a parliament.

The synod having finished their canons, they were signed by the members of both houses of convocation, after receiving the approval of the privy council, and were then transmitted to the provincial synod at York, where they were subscribed *pro forma* and afterwards confirmed by the king's letters patent under the great seal. As the irregular and unconstitutional manner in which this synod was held, and the objectionable matter of the canons formed a leading subject of complaint at the next parliament, we shall here insert the substance of their contents. The first relates to the regal power, and states, "that the most high and sacred order of kings is of divine

right, being the ordinance of God, founded upon the laws of nature and revelation,—that he has supreme power over all persons ecclesiastical and civil,—the care of God's church, with full power to call and dissolve councils, national and provincial,—that for any person or persons to exercise an independent coercive power, either papal or popular, is treasonable against God and the king,—that for any subject to bear arms against the king, either offensive or defensive, upon any pretence whatever, is to resist the powers ordained of God, and, as St. Paul says, 'they shall receive damnation ;' that though tribute, aid, and subsidy be due to the king, yet subjects have a right and property in their goods and estates,—that these two mutually support the honour of both ;—that any clergyman voluntarily omitting to publish these explications upon one Sunday in every quarter of the year, shall be suspended ;—or if in any sermon or public lecture, he shall advance any contrary position, he shall be excommunicated and suspended for two years ; and offending a second time, shall be deprived."

The third canon was to prevent the increase of popery. It directs the clergy to hold private conferences with popish recusants, and, in case of failure with these, to proceed with presentment and excommunication ; and that every bishop should send the names of the persons who had been excommunicated beyond the time allowed by law, that writs might be issued for their seizure.

The fourth canon decrees, "that no person shall impart, disperse, or print, any Socinian books, on pain of excommunication, and further punishment in the Star-chamber." The fifth ordains that the canon against papists shall be in force against all sectaries,—that the clause against Socinian works should be in force against all books written against the doctrines and government of the church,—and that those who resorted to their parish churches, but did not join in the public prayers, were to be subject to the same penalties with recusants and sectaries.

The sixth canon decreed that the following oath should be taken by all archbishops, bishops, priests, and deacons,—all governors of halls, or colleges in the universities, before a public notary, within six months:—"I, A. B., do swear that I do approve the doctrine and discipline, or government, established in the church of England, as containing all things necessary to salvation; and that I will not endeavour, by myself or any other, directly or indirectly, to bring in popish doctrine, contrary to that so established; nor will I ever give my consent to alter the government of this church, by archbishops, bishops, deans, and archdeacons, &c., as it stands now established, and as by right it ought to stand;—nor yet ever to subject it to the usurpation and superstitions of the see of Rome; and all these things I do plainly and sincerely acknowledge and swear, according to the plain and common sense and understanding of the

same words, without any equivocation or mental evasions, or secret reservation whatever; and I do this heartily, willingly, and truly, upon the faith of a Christian. So help me God in Jesus Christ." If any beneficed person in the church refused this oath, he was, after one month, to be suspended from his office; after a second month from his benefice; and after a third to be deprived. This oath was to be taken by all persons before they could take any degree, whether lawyers, physicians, or divines, or be licensed as schoolmasters, or to preach. The whole number of canons made at the above synod was seventeen; but the subjects of the rest were of a very general character. The most unpopular part with both clergy and laity was the oath.

A general feeling of dissatisfaction prevailed at this period through all ranks and classes in the kingdom. The king had lost the confidence and affections of his subjects by exercising an arbitrary power, incompatible with the principles of the British constitution, whilst both law and religion had lost their salutary influence upon the public mind, through the time-serving conduct of the bishops and judges. The Scotch were making great preparations for resisting the king's authority in his violent attempt to change the form of church government and services in that country. They were encouraged to oppose the arbitrary power of the king by assurances from England that, if their armies were to pass the borders, they would be

joined by great numbers of all ranks, who would make common cause with them, being equally dissatisfied with the government both in church and state. Under such critical and eventful circumstances, the king had recourse to another parliament, which met on the 3d of November, 1640, and, with but little intermission, continued sitting for eighteen years, and produced such a revolution in church and state as astonished all Europe.

Before the meeting of this memorable parliament, the principal members had consulted measures for securing more frequent parliaments,—redressing grievances in church and state,—setting bounds to the prerogative, lessening the power of the bishops,—and bringing the king's ministers to account for their arbitrary proceedings; but it does not appear, from any authentic account extant, that a change in the constitution had ever been contemplated by any of the members. It is the province of the civil historian to review the various subjects discussed by this parliament, and we shall only notice those which more immediately connect themselves with the ecclesiastical affairs of the country.

The first business to which the parliament turned their attention was to appoint four committees, the first of which was to examine into religious grievances, when the canons and subsidy passed in the convocation after the dissolution of parliament, furnished them with abundant matter for discussion. Several severe speeches were made against

the compilers of the canons, and, among others, lord Digby remarked, “that the prelates were usurping to themselves a pre-eminence over parliaments, by granting subsidies, and inflicting penalties on those that refused to pay, no less than the loss of heaven and earth,—of heaven by excommunication, and earth by deprivation, without the benefit of an appeal.” On the subject of the oath he said, “What good man can think with patience of such an ensnaring oath as that which the new canons enjoin to be taken by ministers, lawyers, physicians, and graduates in the universities?—where, besides the swearing such an impertinence as that things necessary to salvation are contained in discipline,—besides the swearing those to be of divine right which among the learned were never so considered, as the *arch* things of our hierarchy,—besides the swearing not to consent to the change of that which the state may see sufficient reason to alter,—besides the bottomless perjury of an *et cætera*,—besides all this, men must swear that they swear freely and voluntarily what they are compelled to,—and, lastly, that they swear to the oath in the literal sense,—whereof no two of the makers themselves, that I have heard of, could ever agree in the understanding.” Several others spoke with equal warmth and severity; some were for discharging the canons, and others proposed that they should be *dismounted*, and *melted down*. At the close of the debate it was unanimously resolved,—“that the clergy convened in any convo-

cation or synod, or otherwise, have no power to make any constitutions, canons, or acts whatsoever, in matters of doctrine, discipline, or otherwise, to bind the clergy or laity of the land, without consent of parliament;—that several constitutions and canons ecclesiastical, treated upon by the archbishops, presidents of the convocations for their respective provinces, and the rest of the bishops and clergy of those provinces, and agreed upon with the king's licence in their several synods, in 1640, do not bind the clergy or laity;—that the several constitutions and canons above mentioned do contain in them much matter contrary to the king's prerogative, to the fundamental laws and statutes of this realm, to the rights of parliament, and to the property and liberty of the subject;—that the several grants of benevolence or contributions, granted to his excellent majesty by the clergy of the provinces of Canterbury and York, are contrary to the laws, and ought not to bind the clergy."

There is nothing more common than for men, in their zeal to oppose one error, to commit another, by taking their stand at the opposite extreme. That the convocation had acted contrary to general usages in making these canons must be admitted; but it does not appear that they acted contrary to any statute law of the land. The only authority that had hitherto been thought necessary for making canons was a licence from the crown to draw them up, and when completed they required only to be ratified by royal assent under the great seal;

from which it plainly appears that, in this instance, the commons were actuated in their conduct more by the spirit of resentment than by the letter of the law. As respects the articles contained in those canons, we can by no means subscribe to what the archbishop declared in the house of lords, "that all those canons, and every branch in them, were orthodox, just, and moderate, and most necessary for the present condition of the church of England." Had the archbishop been compelled to prove what he had so positively asserted, he would have found it no very easy task.

Before the debates on the canons were closed in the house of commons, the Scotch commissioners presented a charge against the archbishop in the house of lords, consisting of divers grievances, under three heads. They accused him of attempting to abolish that discipline and government of their kirk which was established by law,—of attempting to obtrude upon them a book of canons and constitutions, for the purpose of establishing a tyrannical power, in the persons of the prelates, over the consciences, liberties, and goods of the people,—and of compelling them to use the Book of Common-Prayer, administration of the sacraments, and other parts of divine worship, without warrant from the kirk, as the only form of divine service, under the severest penalties, both civil and ecclesiastical, contrary to the constitutions of their general assemblies, and to acts of parliament.

A communication being made to the commons of

the charges preferred against the archbishop in the upper house, a long and angry debate ensued. The speaker of the house, Sir H. Grimstone, closed a warm speech by declaring that he had been charged in this house, upon strong proof, with designs to subvert the government, and alter the protestant religion in this kingdom, as well as in Scotland ; and adding, “ there is scarce any grievance or complaint comes before the house wherein he is not mentioned like an angry wasp, leaving his sting in the tail of every thing.” It was then moved that the charge of the Scotch commissioners might be supported by an impeachment of their own ; and “ that the question be now put, whether the archbishop had been guilty of high treason.” On the vote being put, there was a large majority in favour of the charge, when a messenger was sent to the bar of the house of lords, to impeach the archbishop in the name of the commons of England, desiring that his person might be secured, and that they would bring up the particulars of their charge. Upon this charge his grace was committed to the usher of the black rod, to be kept in safe custody till the commons should deliver in their articles of impeachment. On the 26th of February, 1641, a deputation from the house of commons was sent to the house of lords, at the bar of which they presented their lordships with fourteen articles in support of their former charge of high treason against the archbishop, which were read in his presence. His grace made a short reply to each of the charges,

and concluded with an appeal to their lordships, who were acquainted with his whole life, whether there could be one man in the house of commons that could believe in his heart that he was a traitor. This appeal produced but little effect upon the minds of the lords, for they immediately voted him to the Tower. It was intended to have taken him *incognito*, but, being recognised in passing through Newgate street, the coach was surrounded by a mob that followed him with huzzas and insults until he got within the gates of the Tower.

The change which had taken place in the public mind, and the removal of certain placemen from office, presented a favourable opportunity to those who were suffering for religion under different sentences to present their petitions to parliament for relief. The cruelties inflicted on some of those unoffending men, as stated in their petitions, were of such a barbarous character, that they cannot be recorded without fixing an indelible stain on the history of our nation. As a specimen, we may refer to the petition of Dr. Leighton, in which he states that he was apprehended on coming from sermon by a high commission warrant, and dragged along the street with bills and staves to London-house,—that the jailer of Newgate, being sent for, put him in irons, and conveyed him into a loathsome hole swarming with vermin, and admitting no light except through a very small grate; the roof was in such a state of dilapidation, that the snow and rain beat in in various places, and he was

left without either bedding or fire-place. In this wretched place he was kept fifteen weeks, without being seen by any person but the jailer, not even his wife or children being permitted to visit him. On the fourth day after his commitment, the pursuivant went with a host of assistants to search his house for Jesuits' books, and abused his wife in such a brutal and inhuman manner that he could not give the particulars. Every person and place was rifled; a pistol was presented to the breast of a child, five years old, threatening to kill him if he did not discover the books. Chests, presses, and boxes were broken open, and household-furniture, apparel, arms, and every thing was carried away that they thought worth taking. At the end of fifteen weeks he was served with a *subpœna*, on an information laid against him by Sir R. Heath, attorney-general, but he was then sick; and in the opinion of four physicians he had been poisoned, because all his hair and skin came off. Whilst in this state of severe affliction, the cruel sentence was passed upon him, and executed November 26th, 1630, when he received thirty-six stripes on his naked back with a threefold cord, and then stood in the pillory with his hands tied up to a stake almost two hours, after which he was branded in the face with a red-hot iron, had his nose slit, and his ears cut off. He was then carried by water to the Fleet, and shut up in such a room that he was never well; and after being there eight years he was turned into the common jail.

The reading of this petition brought tears from every member of the house. They immediately released him from his fine of ten thousand pounds, and voted him satisfaction for his suffering ; but, such was the unsettled state of the nation at that time, that nothing more was done for him.

Great evils had long existed through the improper execution of the ecclesiastical laws, such as illegal imprisonments, deprivations, and fines, which rendered a reformation essentially necessary. To render such a reformation constitutional, it was necessary to pass a law to that effect, in order to bring the proceedings of the ecclesiastical courts to a parliamentary standard. But, before such a law was passed, the parliament appointed commissioners to be sent into all parts of the kingdom, to demolish and remove all images, altars, or tables turned altar-wise, crucifixes, pictures, and other monuments and relics of idolatry. These measures were resorted to by the commons out of zeal against the arbitrary conduct of the king and his council. But if arbitrary power (that is, acting without law) be an evil when exercised by the king, must not the principle be the same when exercised by any other branch of the legislature ? How to exonerate the commons, which form but one branch of the legislature, from having acted arbitrarily in the above case, is a problem we shall leave to be solved by those who are acquainted with the art of political logic.

The proceedings of this parliament were rendered

memorable by the many angry debates which arose on presenting the petitions sent to the house by the friends of both parties. The advocates of reform were greatly divided in their views, in regard to the extent of which it ought to be carried. The general feeling of the nation was in favour of a reformation in the hierarchy, and a petition was presented to this effect, signed by seven hundred beneficed clergymen, which was followed by a number of others of the same kind from different parts of the kingdom, signed by many thousands of the laity. But reformation was too lenient a measure to satisfy the radicals of that day; for they presented a petition, signed by upwards of fifteen thousand citizens and inhabitants of London, called the "Root and branch petition," the purport of which was that the whole hierarchy, with all its dependencies, might be totally destroyed.

The petitions in favour of the present establishment were not less numerous; for in the space of two years nineteen were presented to the king and the house of lords, containing nearly one hundred thousand signatures, of which six thousand were those of the nobility, gentry, and dignified clergy. But little dependance ought to be placed on the number of names affixed to petitions that are got up when the public mind is under the influence of strong excitement. We may reasonably suppose that numbers of those who had affixed their names to one petition were so little acquainted with the

merits of the case that, had they been applied to by the opposite party, they would as readily have signed a counter petition.

The subjects contained in the petitions were examined by a committee appointed for that purpose, when only the three following were considered proper for the consideration of the house:—“The secular employment of the clergy,—the sole power of the bishops in ecclesiastical affairs, and particularly in ordinations and church censures,—the large revenues of deans and chapters, with the inconveniences that attend the application of them.” All the other particulars were ordered to be sealed up by the clerk, to prevent their being perused. On the subject of the secular employment of the clergy, the house debated at considerable length, when they adopted the two following resolutions:—1. “That the legislative and judicial power of bishops in the house of peers is a great hindrance to the discharge of their spiritual functions, prejudicial to the commonwealth, and fit to be taken away.” 2. “That for bishops or any other clergymen to be in the commission of the peace, or have any judicial power in the Star-chamber, or in any civil court, is a great hindrance to the discharge of their spiritual functions, and prejudicial to the commonwealth, and fit to be taken away,—and that a bill be brought in for that purpose.”

These prompt proceedings of parliament greatly alarmed the king, who summoned both houses to Whitehall, when he declared his readiness to con-

cur with them in removing all innovations in church and state; but although he was for a reformation, he would not consent to an alteration in the constitution. He was not unwilling that the exorbitant power and encroachments of the bishops should, like all other abuses, if they existed, be redressed; but he should not consent to their exclusion from parliament, as it was a privilege they had enjoyed ever since the conquest. But the king's cause gained nothing by this unpopular speech.

A bill was brought into the house of commons to exclude all ecclesiastics from civil employments, and the bishops from sitting in the house of Lords. Many of the best friends of the church supported the measure, believing that the interests of religion would be much more promoted, if the spiritual functions of the clergy were less interrupted by their attention to secular concerns; and that the exclusion of the bishops from the upper house would facilitate that reformation in the church which was so generally called for. This bill passed the commons with a great majority, but on the second reading in the house of lords it was thrown out. Whilst the commons were smarting under their disappointment by the rejection of their bill in the house of lords, they brought in another, still more extravagant, the purport of which was the extirpation of bishops, deans, and chapters, their chancellors, officials, or other officers. The introduction of this bill gave rise to a long debate, and at last obtained a reading; but, no

question being put, it was laid aside to wait for a more favourable opportunity.

Whilst the parliament was aiming at the overthrow of ecclesiastical influence in the affairs of state, the Roman catholics did not look at passing events as uninterested spectators. A conspiracy was formed by them against the king and the church of England; and information was given of it to the archbishop, by *Andreas ab Harbernsfield*, chaplain to the queen of Bohemia; but when the names of Montague, Sir K. Digby, Winter, Windebank, and Porter were mentioned as parties, they being all papists and officers about the court, the whole affair was studiously hushed, to prevent its circulation. But, when the report reached the house of commons, they petitioned the king to issue a proclamation for putting the laws in force against the papists, which was done, but in such a manner that it amounted to nothing. To the clause which enjoined that all popish recusants should depart from the city within fifteen days, it was added, "without a special licence;" so that they had only to obtain a licence from the king, the lords of the council, the bishop, the lieutenant or deputy lieutenant of the county, and they were exempted from the penalty. Besides, the disarming of popish recusants was limited to recusants convict, so that, if they were not convicted, a magistrate had no authority to disarm them. It was also discovered that many recusants had letters of grace to protect their persons and

estates ;—that, instead of the papists departing from London, great numbers were daily resorting thither, and that their insulting language and audacious conduct was insufferable. The conduct of the court in favour of the papists gave countenance to the conjecture that a secret design was in operation by the queen and her party, including several bishops and clergymen, to re-establish popery in England. Whatever designs the queen's party had, there is reason to believe that the king had no such intention ; but, by suffering his deep-rooted prejudices against the puritans to be fomented by the bishops, in proportion as he opposed puritanism, he approximated nearer to popery in various parts of the public worship in the church.

It would be tedious to notice all the debates in this long parliament on the subject of religion ; but some of them are of such importance that their omission would leave a chasm in our ecclesiastical history. Among others, a bill was brought in to abolish the court of high commission. This court had long been considered a national nuisance ; for its proceedings were often equally opposed to law and justice. The promoters of this bill took advantage of the general feeling of disgust against this court to introduce several clauses not connected with its title, and which tended to change the whole ecclesiastical jurisdiction. When the bill had passed, and was taken to receive the royal assent, the objectionable clauses were pointed out to his majesty, who returned the bill to be reviewed by both

houses.. This kindled such a fire in the house of commons against the bishops, as being the greatest enemies to a reformation, that they threatened to have them cut off root and branch. To prevent the desolating effects of the gathering storm, some members of the council interposed, and prevailed on the king to pass the bill in its present form. The overthrow of the high-commission court was followed by a bill for abolishing that of the Star-chamber, so highly offensive to all ranks of his majesty's subjects. This shared the same fate as the former, by which the nation was effectually relieved from the two great engines of arbitrary power and oppression in church and state. In the act for abolishing the high-commission there is a proviso that no new court shall be erected with like powers for the future, from which may be inferred how odious their proceedings were in the eyes of the whole nation.

The union of the bench of bishops in the house of lords proved a strong barrier in the way of the commons, and prevented them from making their projected alterations in the church. After several unsuccessful attempts to divide the bishops, it was resolved to make examples of those who had been principals in compiling the canons at the late convocation, and a bill was brought in to that effect. A committee was appointed to draw up an impeachment against thirteen of them, "for making and publishing the late canons, contrary to the king's prerogative, to the fundamental laws of the

realm, to the rights of parliament, and to the property and liberty of the subject, tending to sedition and of dangerous consequences, and for granting a benevolence to his majesty, to be paid by the clergy of that province, contrary to law." The impeachment was carried to the lords by sergeant Wild, who demanded, in the name of all the commons of England, that the bishops might be forthwith required to answer to the crimes and misdemeanors above-named, in the presence of the house of commons. It was anticipated by the commons that the bishops, rather than risk a *premunire*, would cede their votes in parliament; but in this they were greatly mistaken, for they only required time to prepare their answer, with the assistance of counsel, which was granted them by the lords. The counsel for the bishops put a demurrer to prove that what had been done by them did not amount to a *premunire*, upon which no further notice was taken of the impeachment.

The attachment which the Scotch army had manifested to the parliamentary cause had encouraged the commons to make such extravagant demands. It was therefore resolved in council to detach, if possible, that nation from the parliament, and bring them over to the interest of the king. To effect this, Charles undertook a journey to Scotland, with a determination to grant that people every thing that they might ask. In his opening speech to the parliament at Edinburgh, he told them that the end of his coming into his

native country was to quiet the distractions of the kingdom; "which," said his majesty, "I shall most fully and cheerfully perform. I desire therefore, in the first place, to settle that which concerns religion, and the just liberties of this my native country, before I proceed to any other act." Accordingly his majesty justified the recent opposition of the Scotch to the English liturgy, and their erection of tables in defence of their liberties. He also confirmed the acts of their assembly at Glasgow, which declared "the government of the church by archbishops and bishops contrary to the word of God, and therefore to be abolished." To ingratiate himself the more with his Scottish subjects, he conformed to their mode of worship all the time of their continuance among them; and conferred titles of honour upon many of their gentry; so that when his majesty left, all parties appeared so well pleased, that it was said "he departed a contented prince from a contented people." The king was advised by his council, before he went into Scotland, to grant whatever the Scotch might request of him, and upon these suggestions he acted. But on his return the bishops reproached him for admitting the English hierarchy to be contrary to the word of God; saying that he had at once undone all that his late father and himself had for the last forty years been labouring to effect; and that whilst the friendship of the Scotch was still doubtful, the disaffected in England would become more clamorous for the same indulgences;

in this indeed they were not mistaken. Some time before, the house of commons had sent commissioners into every county in England to correct the late innovations; and they now added to their commission an order "that no member of the universities should do reverence to the communion-table,—that the churchwardens of the respective parishes shall forthwith remove the communion-table from the east end of the churches, where they stand altar-wise, and take away the rails, and level the chancels as before the late innovations." They also appointed a committee to examine all the complaints that were preferred against the clergy for immorality, which was designated the "Committee for scandalous ministers." The institution of such an inquiry was calculated to give much employment to the lovers of scandal, and greatly promote the spirit of infidelity. Such an effect, though not contemplated by the promoters of the measure, must necessarily result from the ministerial character being exhibited as an object of contempt. The spirit of impiety, thus propagated, soon showed itself, for a number of disorderly persons went into the church of St. Olave, Southwark, and used the most irreverent and offensive language whilst the minister was administering the sacrament. Though we would not undertake to exculpate the ecclesiastics of that day from many of the charges preferred against them, yet we deeply deplore the conduct of those, who, by their inflammatory harangues, stirred up the lowest of the

people, in the most tumultuous manner, against the bishops and clergy. A petition hostile to their interests was got up by the apprentices and lowest orders in London, after which large mobs beset both houses of parliament under the pretence of waiting for an answer. But the evident design of those under whom they acted was to terrify the spiritual peers from attending parliament. This was plainly implied in the speech of Mr. Pym, who exclaimed, when a proposition was made to suppress such riotous proceedings, "God forbid that the house of commons should, in any way prevent the people from obtaining their just desires in this way."

Loud complaints were made against the archbishop for continuing to ordain clergymen, and dispose of benefices as they became vacant, whilst he was lying in the Tower under the charge of high treason. Many of the ministers he promoted were so obnoxious to both houses of parliament, that a message was sent him from the house of lords requesting him to send them the names of such persons as he might nominate to any benefice to be approved by the house before they were collated or instituted. It was also objected against him, that when the parishioners had chosen a minister and recommended him for admission, if the candidate's political principles were not in unison with his own, he would either except against him or suffer the living to lapse to the crown. The archbishop acquainted the king with his case, who sent him a peremptory letter requiring him as

often as any benefice, or other spiritual promotion, should become void within his gift, to dispose of it only to such persons as his majesty should nominate; and if either or both houses of parliament should command him otherwise, he was to let it fall in lapse to the crown." As soon as the two houses were informed of the king's order to the archbishop, they published an order of their own requiring him not to dispose of any benefice or promotion that might become void at any time before his trial without the leave and order of the two houses at Westminster. Such was the struggle between the king and parliament for the pulpits! Both parties thought it of importance to have them filled with men of their own principles, who would zealously promote the cause in which they were severally engaged.

Another and more successful attempt was made by the commons to deprive the bishops of their votes, to which the following circumstance proved very favourable. The archbishop of York, finding that the mobs were encouraged by the commons in their outrages against the bishops, so that they could not with safety attend the house, called together all the bishops of his province then in town, and drew up "a protestation to the king and house of lords against all laws, orders, votes, resolutions, and determinations, as in themselves null and of no effect, as had already, or should hereafter pass in that house, during the time of their forced and violent absence." This pro-

testation was signed by twelve bishops, and was made the ground of a serious charge against them; for the commons were no sooner made acquainted with it, than they immediately accused them all of high treason, on which the peers committed them to the Tower.

Whatever informality there might be in presenting such a protestation, or however objectionable some of the expressions in it, the subjecting of twelve bishops with their families to all the infamy and loss which attaches to the highest crime in the state, must be looked upon as an open violation of law, justice, and moderation. But, when men act under the influence of excited and angry passions, law and justice are but little regarded.

The commons had for several months been preparing a bill to deprive the bishops of their votes, and, considering the absence of the prelates from the house of peers as a favourable circumstance, the bill was sent up to the house of lords, and was passed by a large majority, under the title of "a bill for taking away all temporal jurisdiction from those in holy orders." The bill was then sent to the king; but he, not being so eager to give it his royal assent as they were to have it passed, sent to him at Windsor, to urge his compliance by the following considerations:—"1. Because of the grievances the subjects suffered by the bishops' exercise of temporal jurisdiction, and making a party in the house of lords. 2. Because of the great content it would give by the happy con-

junction of both houses in their absence. 3. Because the passing of this bill would be a comfortable pledge of his majesty's gracious assent to the future remedies of those evils which were to be presented to him." The king's views on this important subject were more clear and constitutional than those of his counsellors; but in this, as in many other instances, he ruined his affairs by yielding to the importunity of the queen and her jesuitical council. The unhappy king was at last prevailed upon to affix the sign-manual to the bill, by which the peerage of the bishops, and the whole secular power of the clergy, ceased; their enemies pretending to see the hand of God in it as a just retribution for their pride and abuse of power.

The king's compliance with the wishes of parliament, in disfranchising the bishops, was so far from producing a reconciliation between the parties, that signs of an open rupture became more apparent every day. In the message sent by his majesty to the two houses of parliament, after passing the above bill, he says, "Because great and different troubles are observed to arise concerning the government and liturgy of the church, his majesty declares further, that he will refer that whole consideration to his parliament; but desires not to be pressed to any single act on his part till the whole be so digested and settled by both houses that he may clearly see what is fit to be left, as well as what is fit to be taken away."

On the 2d of June, 1642, a committee from the

house of commons presented the king with the sum of all their desires for the reformation of church and state, in nineteen propositions. Those relating to the church were to the following effect:—That his majesty would be pleased to consent that such a reformation should be made in the church government and liturgy as both houses of parliament should advise; wherein they intended to have consultation with divines, according to the declaration just recited; and that his majesty would contribute his best assistance for raising a sufficient maintenance for preaching ministers through the kingdom, and would consent to the laws for taking away innovations, superstitions, and pluralities, and against scandalous ministers. His majesty replied to these propositions by referring them to the message he sent on passing the bill against the bishops; but respecting the bill against superstitions, innovations, and pluralities, he could promise nothing before he had examined them.

From this period, the war of words was changed into that of swords. The flames of civil war soon spread from one end of the kingdom to the other, inflicting the most ghastly and incurable wounds, both in church and state. A wild and epidemic frenzy seemed to pervade all ranks of society. Whilst the civil war continued, no order or form of church government was observed. The puritan divines were most of them rigid predestinarians, who, being no longer under any restraint, directed all their artillery against the Arminians. Their

sermons consisted chiefly of the defence of predestination, salvation by free grace, and the inability of man to perform any thing that was good. On the first principle they could justify the most unwarrantable proceedings, the end and the means being predetermined; and, by the emphasis they laid on man's inability to do any good thing, they nullified the moral duties, commands, and precepts of the gospel; whilst the leaven of antinomianism, like a desolating flood, spread its baneful and demoralizing influence through the land.

To record the scenes of carnage and blood, when the partisans of the king and those of the parliament turned their lion-like hearts to the destruction of each other, belongs not to the ecclesiastical but to the civil historian. We shall therefore most willingly leave to others a subject so appalling to our common humanity, and pass over the events of a considerable period where religion is not immediately concerned. The conflicting armies that had been brought into the field, to decide the dispute between the king and the parliament, had traced out the line of their operations in different parts of the kingdom in the blood of their countrymen. Proposals were at last agreed upon for a cessation of hostilities, and a deputation of six lords and six members of the house of commons was admitted to an audience with the king in one of the colleges at Oxford. Having gone through the usual preliminaries, the deputation proposed, as their terms of reconciliation, that his majesty should give his

consent to the five following bills:—1. For the suppression of divers innovations in churches and chapels, in and about the worship of God. 2. For the utter abolishing and removing all archbishops, bishops, their chancellors, and commissaries. 3. For punishing all scandalous clergymen, and others. 4. Against the enjoying pluralities of benefices by spiritual persons, and against non-residence. 5. For calling an assembly of learned and godly divines to be consulted with by the parliament for settling the government and liturgy of the church, and for the vindication and clearing of the church of England from false aspersions and interpretations.

The king agreed that a time and place should be appointed for the commissioners on both sides to meet, to discuss the subjects proposed, together with the following propositions of his own:—

- “ 1. That his majesty’s revenues, magazines, towns, forts, and ships, may be forthwith restored.
- 2. That whatsoever has been done or published contrary to the known laws of the land, and his majesty’s legal rights, may be renounced and recalled.
- 3. That whatever illegal power over his majesty’s subjects has been exercised by either or both houses, or any committee, may be disclaimed, and all persons that have been imprisoned by virtue thereof be forthwith discharged.
- 4. That a good bill may be framed, for the better preserving the Book of Common Prayer from the scorn and violence of Brownists, Anabaptists, and other sectaries, with such clauses for the ease of tender consciences

as his majesty has formerly offered. 5. That all persons to be excepted out of the general pardon shall be tried *per paces*, according to the common course of law, and that it be left to that to acquit or condemn them. 6. That in the mean time there be a cessation of arms, and free trade for all his majesty's subjects, for twenty days." Through the baneful influence of some of his majesty's advisers, this treaty was broken off, and the dispute was left to be decided by the sword.

In June, 1643, the parliament passed an ordinance, "for calling an assembly of godly divines and others to settle the government and liturgy of the church of England, and for vindicating and clearing the doctrines of the said church." The convocation assembled agreeably to the summons, but the times were too turbulent for them to transact any business of importance, and the assembly broke up by mutual consent, without any form of prorogation. The irregular manner in which they were convened may in part account for their abrupt dissolution. In summoning this synod, the parliament departed from the established rule of limiting their selection to the beneficed clergy, and directed the knights and burgesses to send in a list of the names of such persons as they thought properly qualified. Lord Clarendon, in his account of that assembly, declares that, of the one hundred and twenty members of which it consisted, there were not more than twenty who were not avowed enemies to the established church. Nor is the account

given of this meeting by that noted republican, Milton, more favourable. "If," says he, "the affairs of the state were in such disorder, that of religion was no better; to reform which a certain number of divines were called, neither chosen by any law nor custom ecclesiastical, nor eminent for either piety or knowledge above others left out. The most part of them were such as had preached and cried down, with great show of zeal, the avarice and pluralities of bishops and prelates; that one cure of souls was a full employment for one spiritual pastor, how able soever, if not a charge above human strength. Yet these conscientious men, ere any part of the work was done for which they came together, and that on the public salary, wanted not boldness, to the ignominy and scandal of their pastor-like profession, and especially of their boasted reformation, to seize into their hands, or not unwillingly to accept, besides one, sometimes two or more, of the best livings, collegiate masterships in the universities, rich lectures in the city, setting sail to all winds that might blow gain into their covetous bosoms."

The advantages obtained by the king's army, in different parts of the kingdom, over the parliamentary forces, induced the parliament to apply to the Scotch for assistance. The Scotch agreed to lend their assistance on condition that the episcopal government of the church of England should be destroyed, "root and branch," and that a solemn league and covenant should be entered into by the English parliament, for establishing the presby-

terian form of government in the church of England. The above conditions were acceded to by the English commissioners,—the league and covenant was drawn up accordingly,—agreed to by the general assembly of the church of Scotland,—approved of by the assembly of divines at Westminster,—and taken with great solemnity by the members of both houses of parliament. The professed object of the covenant, as expressed in the preamble, was, “the advancement of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”—“against the treacherous and bloody plots, conspiracies, attempts and practices of the enemies of God against the true religion,—especially in these three kingdoms, ever since the reformation of religion,—whereof the deplorable state of the church and kingdom of Ireland,—the distressed state of the church and kingdom of England,—and the dangerous state of the church and kingdom of Scotland;” &c. “After mature deliberation, we have resolved to enter into a mutual and solemn league and covenant, wherein we all subscribe, and each for himself, with our hands lifted up to the most High God, do swear,—that we sincerely, really, and constantly, through the grace of God, endeavour in our several callings the preservation of the reformed religion in the church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, against our common enemies; the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland; and we shall endeavour to bring the churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunc-

tion and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of church government, directory for worship," &c. "That we shall in like manner, without respect of persons, endeavour the extirpation of popery, prelacy, that is, church government by archbishops, bishops, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and all other ecclesiastical officers depending upon that hierarchy," &c. This league and covenant professes further "to maintain the right and privileges of parliament along with the king's authority; and to discover and bring to justice all incendiaries and malignants."

The members of both houses of parliament, having themselves voluntarily sworn to the league and covenant, immediately directed measures for compelling others to follow their example. The oath was to be tendered to every person above eighteen years of age, and the names of all who refused to take it, on being called upon twice, were to be returned to the house of commons, and they were to be dealt with accordingly. The violent proceedings of those who had undertaken to reform abuses, and break the galling yoke of ecclesiastical bondage under which the nation had so long groaned, soon convinced every unbiassed mind that the promised relief was nominal; that it was the old line of conduct pursued under a new name,—that those who had the sovereign power would use it,—and that tyranny was not less galling when exercised by parliament and presbyterian divines than it was when in the hands of the king and bishops.

The despotic manner in which the committees appointed by parliament to inquire into the conduct of "malignant and disaffected ministers" executed their office gave encouragement to persons of no principle or character to prefer charges against the clergy. The testimonies of some of those "accusers of the brethren" were so incongruous that the committee, out of regard to their own character, could not proceed upon such dubious evidence. The failures arising out of the tardy way of proving charges by witnesses induced the committee to adopt a more summary way of proceeding. The league and covenant was tendered, and every clergyman that refused to take it was immediately turned out of his living. It is difficult to say what number of clergymen lost their livings by refusing to take the oath, but there is reason to believe that not fewer than two thousand were deprived, and their estates, both real and personal, seized towards defraying the expenses of the war. The effects of this test fell most severely on the fellows and graduates in the university, one hundred and ninety-five of whom were banished from the different colleges and halls in Cambridge, for no other crime but that of refusing to sign the league and covenant.

The views entertained on this subject, and the statements made by the writers in favour of the different parties, are perfectly irreconcilable. Neal, who writes in favour of parliament, says, "From this time the university of Cambridge

enjoyed a happy tranquillity, learning flourished, religion and good manners were promoted, at a time when the rest of the nation was in blood and confusion." The famous Dr. Barwick, writing on the same subject, says, "They reduced a glorious and renowned university almost to a mere monster, and did more in less than three years than the apostate Julian could effect in the whole of his reign ; viz., broke the heart-strings of learning, and all learned men, and thereby luxated all the joints of Christianity in this kingdom. We are not afraid to appeal to any impartial judge, whether if the Goths and Vandals, or even the Turks themselves, had over-run this nation, they would have more inhumanly abused a flourishing university, than these pretended advancers of religion have done. Having thrust out one of the eyes of this kingdom, made eloquence dumb, philosophy sottish, widowed the arts, drove the muses from their ancient habitation, plucked the reverend and orthodox professors out of the chairs, and silenced them in prison or their graves, turned religion into rebellion, changed the apostolical chair into a desk of blasphemy, torn the garland from off the head of learning to place it on the dull brows of disloyal ignorance, unhived those numerous swarms of labouring bees which used to drop honey-dews over all this kingdom, to place in their room swarms of senseless drones." We might as well attempt "to wash the Ethiop white" as to harmonize the above discrepancies; the reader must be

left to draw his own conclusions. Some truth may be found in each statement, though both are highly coloured by party prejudice, which renders it necessary to consult the writers on both sides before judgment is pronounced in favour of either party.

The ravages made by these Reformers on the monuments of antiquity is greatly to be regretted. On pretence of removing the objects of superstition and idolatry, many valuable paintings, both on glass and canvass, were utterly destroyed. All the images, candlesticks, crucifixes, and plate, were taken from the cathedrals, and sold for money to carry on the war; nor did the monuments of the dead escape the spoliation. The beautiful antique cross that stood in the middle of St. Paul's church-yard, which was a pulpit of wood in the form of a cross, covered with lead, where the first Reformers used frequently to preach to the people, was, by order of parliament, taken down and destroyed, together with the cross that stood in Cheapside, and another at Charing-cross.

The great number of clergymen that were deprived for refusing to take the covenant left many churches without a minister: and, the parliament having abolished episcopacy, it was necessary to provide means for supplying the vacant churches. The plan for ordaining ministers, drawn up by the assembly of divines at Westminster, in 1644, was confirmed by the parliament. It proposes that a committee, to consist of ten members of the assem-

bly of divines, and thirteen presbyters of the city of London, should be empowered with full authority to examine and ordain by imposition of hands such candidates as they considered duly qualified for the ministry. And all persons ordained by them were to be reputed "ministers of the church of England, sufficiently authorized for any office or employment, and capable of all advantages appertaining to the same."

Having settled the subject of ordination, the assembly proceeded to prepare a form of public worship; for, although the liturgy had been laid aside some time, no other form had been substituted. In January, 1645, a "Directory for public worship" was published by the authority of both houses of parliament. The ordinance for establishing the use of this Directory repealed the acts of Edward VI. and Elizabeth, by which the use of the liturgy had been established. The use of the Directory was far from giving general satisfaction. Some positively refused to use it, and, notwithstanding the prohibition, continued to use the liturgy; others refused all forms, and some used a form of their own. Finding that one act of parliament was not sufficient to bring the nation to presbyterian uniformity, they passed another, imposing a heavy fine upon such ministers as used any other form but the Directory. By the same act the use of the liturgy was prohibited in any private family under the penalty of five pounds for the first offence, ten pounds for the second, and for the

third one year's imprisonment. Every minister who refused to use the Directory was to pay a penalty of forty shillings, and those who published any thing against it were to pay a fine of not less than five nor more than fifty pounds, to be appropriated to the use of the poor. Whatever right the parliament had to prohibit the use of the liturgy in the churches, no apology can possibly be offered for their inflicting such severe penalties on its use in family and private devotion. But the sword of civil and ecclesiastical power had changed hands, and its new occupants exhibited a dexterity in its use equal to that of the persons from whom it had been wrenched.

The bitter contentions about trifles which had so long agitated the reformed church had produced an unhappy effect on the public mind. The rigid inflexibility of the puritans in opposing the habits and ceremonies—the severe treatment the nonconformists met with from the high church party—and now, when the power had passed into the hands of the presbyterians, they evinced a spirit of bigotry and persecution not to be exceeded by the blind devotees of the church of Rome, as appears from their treatment of the independents.

The independents were for establishing an unlimited toleration; but the presbyterians were actuated by a very different spirit; for they published an ordinance against heretics, directing “that all persons who shall maintain, defend, or publish, by preaching or writing, the heresies

which are afterwards mentioned, should be committed to prison without bail till the next jail delivery, and if the indictment shall then be found, and the party not abjure, he shall suffer the pains of death as in the case of felony."

The most effectual means of destroying religious influence in the heart is to compel conformity to prescribed forms of worship by severe legislative enactments. This assertion is fully supported by the general state of religion in England at this time, when not only was "the spirit in the letter lost," but even the letter itself nearly obliterated. The principles of religion and morality were supplanted by opinions the most blasphemous and atheistical. That this severe censure on the nation was not too strong will appear from an act that was passed for punishing the licentiousness which so generally prevailed. In the preamble of this act it is stated that there were those who professed that all kinds of sin were in their own nature as holy and righteous as the duties of prayer, preaching, or giving thanks to God,—that happiness consisted in committing such crimes,—that there were no such things as heaven or hell, nor any unrighteousness or sin, independent of conscience and opinion. Such was the wretched state of religion and morals at the period from which we date the rise of the people called quakers, a name first given them out of derision, by Justice Bennett, of Derby, in the year 1650, because the founder of the sect, when interrogated

by the magistrate, was greatly agitated ; and, being reproached for it by his enemies, he faithfully admonished them to tremble at the word of God.

It is very difficult to trace the true origin of this highly respectable people ; for at that time the church was so rent in pieces by divisions, and the few who were religiously disposed saw such inconsistency among the ministers of religion, and heard so much said against the form of worship established at the Reformation, that they were ready to unite with any teachers whose general views were in accordance with their own. The quakers were first formed into a regular sect by George Fox, who was born at Drayton in Leicestershire, in the year 1624.

There is a peculiarity in the phraseology of the quakers, or Friends, as we shall in future call them, not merely in substituting the singular for the plural number, but in their not using certain words employed by all other orthodox theological writers. This peculiarity has given rise to a suspicion of their not holding the doctrines which others designate by those words or phrases. This mistake, which has left an unfavourable impression on the minds of some, we shall endeavour to correct in stating the doctrines held by them as a body.

First. They reject the words "original sin," because they do not find them in the Scriptures ; nor do they ever denominate the Scriptures "the word of God," though they believe them to have been written by divine inspiration.

Second. On the same principle they reject the word Trinity, because the word does not occur in the Scriptures, nor in the writings of the fathers of the three first centuries. But the sense in which they hold the doctrine is not clearly expressed by either their ancient or modern writers. William Penn, after attempting to refute what he considered the gross notions of three persons in the Trinity, says, "that he acknowledges a Father, Word, and Holy Spirit, according to the Scriptures, but not according to the notions of men, and that these three are truly and properly one, of one nature as well as one will."

Isaac Pennington, one of their ancient writers, says, "That the three are distinct as three beings or persons, we no where read in the Scriptures, but we do read there that they are one. Thus we believe their being to be one, their life one, their light one, their wisdom one, their power one. And he that knoweth and seeth any one of them knoweth and seeth them all." This is founded upon what our Saviour said to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

John Crook, another of their ancient writers, speaking of the Trinity, says, "We acknowledge one God, the Father of Jesus Christ, witnessed within man by the Spirit of truth, and these three are one, and agree in one; and he that honours the Father honours the Son that proceeds from him; and he that denies the Spirit denies the Father and the Son." Such were the views of the

Friends on the doctrine of the Trinity, as held at an early period of their history; and that their sentiments on that subject are not changed we learn from one of their modern writers. Henry Tuke, when writing on this subject, says, "This belief in the divinity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, induced some of the teachers in the Christian church, about three hundred years after Christ, to form a doctrine to which they gave the name of Trinity; but in our writings we seldom make use of the term, thinking it best on such a subject to keep to Scripture expressions, and to avoid those disputes which have since perplexed the Christian world, and led to speculations beyond the power of human abilities to decide. If we consider that we ourselves are composed of body, soul, and spirit, and yet cannot determine how even these are united, how much less may we expect clearness on a subject so far above our finite comprehension as that of the divine nature."

They professedly believe that Jesus Christ was man, because he took flesh and inhabited the body prepared for him, and was subject to all our sinless infirmities; but they also believe in his divinity, because he was the Word. That he was miraculously conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary. That as man he died for our sins, rose again, and was raised up into glory; having by that one great universal offering become a sacrifice for peace, atonement, and reconciliation between God and man. That

Jesus Christ, who sitteth on the right hand of the majesty of heaven, is our king, high-priest, and prophet in his church, and by his Spirit also maketh intercession in our hearts.

On the doctrine of justification, as held by the Friends, Henry Tuke writes thus:—"So far as remission of sins, and a capacity to receive salvation are parts of justification, we attribute it to the sacrifice of Christ, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins. But, when we consider justification as a state of divine favour and acceptance, we ascribe it not simply either to faith or works, but to the sanctifying operation of the Spirit of Christ, from which living faith and acceptable works alone can proceed, and by which we may come to know that 'the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God.' In attributing our justification, through the grace of God in Christ Jesus, to the operation of the Holy Spirit, which sanctifies the heart and produces the work of regeneration, we are supported by the testimony of St. Paul, who says, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but of his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' By this view of the doctrine of justification we conceive the apparently different sentiments of the apostles Paul and James are reconciled. Neither of them says that faith alone, or works alone, are the cause of our being justified; but as one of them asserts the necessity of faith,

and the other of works, for effecting this great object, a clear and convincing proof is afforded that both contribute to our justification, and that faith without works, and works without faith, are equally dead."

The Friends do not use the ordinance of water baptism. They assert that it is not by an outward washing with water that the heart of man is made clean and fitted for heaven. The subject is thus treated by Barclay in his apology:—"As there is one Lord, and one faith, so there is one baptism, which is not the putting away the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience before God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And this baptism is a pure and spiritual thing; that is, the baptism of the Spirit, and by which we are buried with him; that, being washed and purged from our sins, we may walk in newness of life, of which the baptism of John was only a figure which was commanded for a time, and not to continue for ever." The same author further adds, that "infant baptism is a mere human invention, for which neither precept nor practice is to be found in Scripture."

Their sentiments on the sacrament of the Lord's supper are, that "the communion of the body and blood of Christ is inward and spiritual, which is the participation of his flesh and blood, by which the inward man is daily nourished in the hearts of those in whom Christ dwells; of which things the breaking of bread by Christ with his disciples was a figure, which they even used in the church for a time who

had received the substance, for the sake of the weak, even abstaining from things strangled and from blood, attending to the washing of one another's feet and the anointing the sick with oil ; all which are commanded with no less authority and solemnity than the former ; yet, seeing they are only the shadows of better things, so they cease in such as have obtained the substance."

The discipline of their church is conducted by their monthly, quarterly, and annual meetings. Deputations of two or more of each sex are sent from the monthly meetings to represent their constituents at the quarterly meeting. Being assembled at the time and place appointed, a meeting is first held for religious worship. This being over, the men and women separate, and retire to their different apartments, and proceed to business by asking the following questions.

1. "Are meetings for worship and discipline kept up, and do Friends attend them duly and at the time appointed ? and do they avoid all unbecoming behaviour therein ?"

2. "Is there among you any growth in the truth ? and hath any convincement appeared since the last meeting ?"

3. "Are Friends preserved in love towards each other ? If differences arise, is due care taken speedily to end them ? and are Friends careful to avoid and discourage tale-bearing and detraction ?"

4. "Do Friends endeavour by example and precept to train up their children, servants, and those

under their care, in a religious life and conversation, consistent with our Christian profession, in the frequent reading of the holy Scriptures, and in plainness of speech, behaviour, and apparel?"

5. "Are Friends just in their dealings, and punctual in fulfilling their engagements? and are they annually advised carefully to inspect their affairs at least once in the year?"

6. "Are Friends careful to avoid all vain sports, and places of diversion, gaming, all unnecessary frequenting of taverns and other public houses, excess in drinking, and other intemperance?"

7. "Do Friends bear a faithful and Christian testimony against receiving and paying tithes, priests' demands, and those called church-rates?"

8. "Are Friends faithful in their testimony against bearing arms, and being in any way concerned in the militia, in privateers, letters of marque, or armed vessels; or dealing in prize-goods?"

9. "Are Friends clear of defrauding the king of his customs, duties, and excise, and of using or dealing in goods suspected to be such?"

10. "Are the necessities of the poor among you properly inspected and relieved? and is good care taken of the education of their offspring?"

11. "Have any meetings been settled, discontinued, or united, since last year?"

12. "Are there any Friends prisoners for their testimonies; and has any one died being a prisoner, or been discharged, since last year, when, and how?"

13. "Is early care taken to admonish such as appear inclinable to marry in a manner contrary to the rules of the society, and to deal accordingly with such as persist in refusing to take counsel?"

14. "Have you two or more faithful Friends appointed by the monthly meeting as overseers in each particular meeting? Are the rules respecting removals duly observed? and is care taken that when any thing appears amiss the rules of our discipline be timely and impartially put in practice?"

15. "Do you keep a record of the prosecutions and sufferings of your members? Is due care taken to register all marriages, births, and burials? Are the titles of your meeting-houses, burial-grounds, &c., duly preserved and recorded, and all legacies and donations properly secured and duly applied?"

The society expects these questions to be publicly asked and answered in their quarterly meetings; some of them in one, and others in another, so that they all may be put in the course of the year. But they consider the regular attendance of their religious meetings, the promotion of brotherly love in the body, and the care of the poor, to be of such importance that they require the first, third, and tenth questions to be answered every quarter.

The society of Friends continuing to increase, in the year 1669 they established a yearly meeting, which since the year 1675 has been regularly held in London the third week in May. The annual meeting is composed of four deputies of each sex,

from every quarterly meeting, except York, which sends eight, and London, which sends twelve. One important part of the yearly meeting is to ascertain the state of the society in all its branches of discipline during the past year. This is done by hearing the answers to the several questions sent by the deputies from the different quarterly meetings. Another part of the business done at the annual meeting is to ascertain the amount of what is called "Friends' sufferings," that is, the value of the goods that have been taken from them for tithes and church-rates, and for refusing to serve in the militia.

Another part of the business done at the yearly meeting is reading letters from foreign societies and preparing answers. They also draw up and publish an annual letter, or pastoral address, styled "The general epistle," which usually embraces three subjects;—first, the general state of the society, including their sufferings for tithes and other demands for the church;—the second contains advice to the society for the regulation of their moral and civil conduct;—the third subject has been, since the year 1787, the expression of their abhorrence of the slave-trade.

That part of the discipline of the Friends which relates to their marriages is worthy of general imitation. It is an established rule of the society that no man shall propose marriage to a woman without the previous consent of his own and her parents or guardians; and on any member violating this rule,

he is brought to account before the meeting to which he belongs. Those who intend to marry appear together, and declare their intention to the monthly meeting; and, if not attended by their parents or guardians, they produce a certificate of their consent signed by witnesses. The meeting then appoints a committee to inquire whether the parties are clear of other matrimonial engagements; and if at a subsequent meeting the parties still declare their intention, and no objection is reported, the meeting consents for them to solemnize their intended marriage. This is done at a meeting for public worship, when, towards the close, the parties stand up, and solemnly take each other for man and wife, promising with God's assistance to be loving and faithful in that relation, till separated by death. A certificate of the proceedings is then publicly read and signed by the parties, and afterwards by the relations and others as witnesses.

The mode of excommunicating members from the society of Friends is peculiar, and is called by them a "disownment." This is attended with more serious consequences than a stranger would imagine. In their monthly and quarterly meetings, every man stands on an equality, and each has the privilege of expressing his assent or dissent on any subject that comes before them, which may in part account for that air of independence which is so peculiar in the carriage of a Friend. But the person who is disowned, though he may continue to worship with them, loses the privilege of speaking on any subject

connected with the affairs of the society. He is not allowed to marry with a member of the society, nor will his affirmation be any longer taken instead of his oath ; and, if he be a poor man, he is no longer exempt from the militia, by submitting to three months' imprisonment.

We cannot close our account of this highly respectable body of Christians without remarking that there have been but few sections of the Christian church, ancient or modern, the founders of which have evinced a more fervent zeal for the salvation of perishing sinners than did the first race of the Friends. Their patience and perseverance, under the most galling and unjust persecutions, would have done honour to the martyrs in the apostolic age. Their speakers, " inflamed with charity divine," took their stations in the streets, or wherever they could collect a few people to hear, and the great Head of the church crowned their labours with abundant success. It is to be regretted that the same zealous efforts to publish the great doctrines of Christianity have not characterized their successors. We consider the want of a stated ministry, holding forth the word of life, to be a radical defect in their system—a defect which to the youth in their community can never be supplied by all their excellent rules for the regulation of life and propriety of conduct.

On resuming the thread of our history, we are brought back to the period when the government of the commonwealth was vested in Oliver Crom-

well, with the title of "Protector of the three kingdoms," who was to be assisted in the government by a council of twenty-one. The first article relating to religion, in the government of the protector, was in substance as follows:—"That the Christian religion contained in the Scriptures be the public profession of these nations;—that as soon as possible a less objectionable provision be made for the maintenance of ministers,—that none be compelled to conform to the public religion by pains and penalties,—that such as profess faith in God by Jesus Christ, though differing in judgment from the doctrine, worship, or discipline publicly held, shall not be restrained from the profession of their faith and the exercise of their religion, but shall receive protection so far as their liberty does not interrupt the public peace; provided this liberty be not extended to popery, prelacy, or the practice of licentiousness. That all laws, statutes, and ordinances, contrary to the aforesaid liberty shall be esteemed null and void."

The condition to which the church of England was at this time reduced was truly deplorable; being classed with papists, the profane, and blasphemers; yet the members enjoyed greater privileges under the government of the protector than they had done under the parliament; and it must in justice be said of the protector that he was disposed to allow every one all the liberty he could consistently with the safety of his person and government. It is worthy of remark that it was under the pro-

tectorate that the society was first formed for the relief of widows and children of ministers, since known by the name of the "Corporation for the sons of the clergy." This institution was at first supported by private subscriptions and collections at annual sermons; but in the following reign it was established by charter, and has continued to flourish ever since.

The restoration of king Charles II. was an event of great national interest. The public mind had long been in a very dissatisfied state. All classes felt the want of a head to whom they could confidently look. They had long proved that no dependance was to be placed in the army; for it was pervaded by a turbulent party spirit, which threatened the most serious consequences. The parliament was so divided by faction that it had quite lost the confidence of the country. The protector was no more; and his son Richard, who was nominated his successor, had no abilities for directing the national affairs either at home or abroad. In this state of general anxiety, every eye was turned towards the king, long before any one durst venture to communicate his thoughts on that subject. But no sooner was the whisper heard than it echoed from shore to shore; and from the vaulted roof of Westminster Hall the reverberated sound was heard, "that, according to the ancient constitution, the government of this kingdom is, and ought to be, in king, lords, and commons." Like men acting under the impulse of excited feelings, without

calm deliberation, they appointed a committee to draw up a dutiful letter to the king, inviting him to return to his dominions and crown, without proposing any stipulation for either civil or religious liberty. This ill-advised measure produced the most unhappy effects, which were severely felt through this and the following reign.

The king landed at Dover the 26th of May, 1660, and on Tuesday the 29th rode in triumph, with his two brothers, through the city of London to Whitehall, amidst the acclamations of an innumerable crowd of spectators. On the second day after his arrival at Whitehall, the king went to the house of lords ; and, after a short congratulatory speech, passed an act to turn the present convention into a parliament. The king introduced the liturgy of the church of England into his chapel on his arrival at Whitehall, and the example was immediately followed in many places both in town and country. All the acts and ordinances of the long parliament which had not the royal assent were in themselves null ; consequently episcopacy was still the legal establishment, and the Common Prayer the only authorized form of worship. The old sequestered clergy were reinstated in their former livings, by which a great number of presbyterian ministers were dispossessed, those only retaining the livings where the former incumbents were dead. An order was sent from the house of lords directing the chancellors of both universities to see that the several colleges were governed according to their

respective statutes,—that those persons who had been unjustly put out of their headships, fellowships, or other offices relating to the several colleges or universities, may be restored. The execution of this order produced a great change in both the universities. All the surviving unmarried fellows were restored to their respective fellowships. The honours of the universities were offered to all those who had been ejected therefrom in consequence of their attachment to the royal cause. The opening such an easy way of acquiring academical honours induced numbers to accept the offered boon, and in a few months the degree of doctor of divinity was conferred on one hundred and fifty, and a far greater number in other faculties. The propriety of conferring such a number of academical honours by a royal mandamus, without any regard to their respective qualifications, has very justly been called in question. The vacancies occasioned in the cathedrals and other churches, by ejecting the presbyterian divines, were soon supplied by those who had just received the honours of the universities, but it was soon seen in their lives that many of them were men of very indifferent principles.

The English hierarchy was now restored to its former pre-eminence, except the peerage of the bishops; but a serious difficulty presented itself in meeting the case of the malcontents. The most dispassionate were of opinion that some concessions should be made to meet their prejudices, as many

of the most important offices in the universities, and some of the largest benefices in the church, were still held by presbyterians. If the king and his prime minister were sincere in their professions, they were in favour of an accommodation ; but the bishops, still smarting from their severe presbyterian castigation, declared that if there must be a schism they had better have it out of the church than within its pale. The king, however, directed the presbyterians to draw up a form of church-government with which they would be satisfied, and the subject should be debated in his presence with some of his own divines. In compliance with the king's command, the presbyterians drew up their proposals and presented them to the king, by whom they were graciously received ; but, instead of the subject being debated, a reply in writing was presented by the bishops. The concessions which the king thought proper to grant were put into the form of a declaration, a copy of which was delivered to Mr. Baxter and other presbyterian divines, with liberty to make exceptions, by pointing out what was objectionable. These divines wishing for some further amendments, the king appointed a day when he would hear what could be said on both sides. The persons appointed to debate the subject were, on behalf of the church, six bishops and two deans, and, on the side of the malcontents, seven presbyterian divines. But the business was conducted without argument ; for the chancellor read the king's declaration, allowing each party to make their

exception, and the king to decide. The whole being gone through, his majesty delivered his judgment respecting what should stand in the declaration, and appointed bishops Morley and Henchman, Dr. Reynolds and Mr. Calamy, to express it in proper words; and, if they disagreed, the earl of Anglesea and lord Hollis were to decide.

The declaration, having received its final emendation, was published by the king as supreme head of the church in all ecclesiastical affairs. The following is an abstract of its contents:—" His majesty promises to encourage the public exercises and observation of the sabbath;—that insufficient and scandalous clergymen shall not be admitted into the church;—that none shall be preferred to the prelacy but men of learning and piety, and who were frequent preachers;—that no bishop shall confer ordination without the advice and assistance of presbyters chosen by the diocess;—that the preferments of deans and chapters shall be given to the most learned and pious presbyters of the diocess;—that the minister shall admit none to the sacrament until they have made a satisfactory confession of their faith;—that all diligence shall be used for the instruction and reformation of scandalous offenders, who shall not partake of the Lord's supper till they have testified their repentance;—that every rural dean, assisted by three or four of the clergy, to be elected by a majority of the deanery, shall meet once a month to receive complaints from the ministers and churchwardens

of parishes, and to compose such differences as shall be referred to them by arbitration, reforming such things as are amiss by their admonition, or presenting them to the bishop ;—that no bishop shall exercise any arbitrary power, or impose any thing on his clergy or people contrary to the law of the land ;—that the liturgy shall be reviewed with an equal number of divines of both persuasions, and such alterations made as shall be thought necessary ; and, in the mean time, none shall be punished for not using it ;—that none shall be compelled to receive the sacrament kneeling, nor to use the cross in baptism, nor to bow at the name of Jesus, nor to use the surplice, except in the royal chapel and in cathedral and collegiate churches ;—that subscription, and the oath of canonical obedience, shall not be required at present for ordination or institution, but only the oaths of allegiance and supremacy ;—that none shall be deprived of their preferments for not declaring their assent to the thirty-nine articles, provided they read and declare their assent to all the doctrinal articles, and to the sacraments."

The publication of this declaration gave general satisfaction, except to a few of the high presbyterians ; and had it been passed into a law, and been acted upon, those unhappy commotions, which so painfully affected the best interests of the country, might have been prevented. But there is too much reason to believe that the king never intended to grant what he had promised in

the declaration. The whole scheme was evidently of that kind of court manufacture denominated by king James I. "king-craft." This conclusion is founded upon the following fact:—Upon reading the king's declaration, it was agreed that the lords and commons should wait upon his majesty in a body, to return him their thanks for such a gracious and healing measure. A bill was then brought into the house of commons to pass the declaration into a law; but, when the question was put for the bill to be read a second time, it was opposed by one of the secretaries of state, which left the sentiments of the court no longer doubtful on that subject. This fact presents one of the most remarkable anomalies in the history of the British house of parliament. On the 9th day of November, the unanimous thanks of the house were presented to the king for his gracious declaration, and on the 28th of the same month it was rejected by one of his majesty's ministers, before a second reading. Thus the pleasing anticipations of a large majority of the nation were blasted at once, and the warning was given to prepare for further trouble.

The conference promised by the king in the declaration which he published the preceding year was held at the bishop of London's lodgings, at the Savoy, the professed object of which was, "To review the Book of Common-Prayer, comparing it with the most ancient and purest liturgies; and to take into serious consideration the several direc-

tions and rules, forms of prayer, and things in the said Book of Common-Prayer contained, and to advise and consult upon the same, and the several objections and exceptions which shall now be raised against the same; and, if occasion be, to make such reasonable and necessary alterations, corrections, and amendments, as shall be agreed upon to be needful and expedient for giving satisfaction to tender consciences, and for the restoring and continuance of peace and unity in the churches under his majesty's government and direction."

The termination of this conference was just what might have been expected. Bishop Sheldon told them at the first meeting that the episcopal party had nothing to propose, being perfectly satisfied with the legal establishment; that it was for the dissentients to state their objection to the laws, with the proposed alterations. The dissentients were required to state all they had to offer at once in writing, as no one subject would be considered separately. There was no little policy in this requisition, as it was well known that the dissentients were much divided on several points. A few alterations in the liturgy, and liberty to act at discretion in reference to some of the ceremonies, would have satisfied many; but the majority wanted an entire new liturgy, and they appointed Mr. Richard Baxter to compose one. This project proved fatal to the cause of the dissentients. The idea that a new liturgy, drawn up by a single in-

dividual in a few days, was to be put in competition with one that had been used in the church for more than a century, appeared to their opponents so preposterous that it was rejected at once, and the conference closed without any thing being obtained in favour of the dissenters.

The next step taken by the presbyterians was a presentation of their case to the king. They fully expected that their prayer would be granted, in consideration of their zealous exertions to effect his restoration; but Charles was now seated on his throne, and had no grateful remembrance of the men that promoted his ascent. The bishops were now resolved that the terms of conformity should be more strictly enforced than they hitherto had been. To bring their plan into speedy operation, they resolved that all lecturers and incumbents should subscribe their assent and consent to every thing contained in the Book of Common-Prayer. Another subscription was also enacted against the league and covenant, pronouncing it an unlawful oath. "This," says bishop Burnet, "was intended to bear chiefly against the aged men, who had not only taken the covenant themselves, but had pressed it upon others." However plausible this might appear to the episcopalians, the presbyterians had some reason to think theirs a hard case, as the king himself had taken the oath and covenant, and now persecuted them for having done the same thing.

The Savoy conference having terminated as

above related, the king sent a letter to the convocation, commanding them to review the Book of Common-Prayer, and to make such additions and amendments as they thought necessary. The convocation was engaged in this review a whole month, and made additions and alterations to the amount of several hundreds; but not one of the objectionable passages pointed out by the presbyterians was touched. Dr. Tennison, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, remarks, "If there was reason for all these changes, there was equal if not greater reason for some further improvements. If they had foreseen what has since come to pass, I charitably believe they would not have done all they did and no more; and yet I also believe that, if they had offered to move much further, a stone would have been laid under their wheel by a secret but powerful hand, for the mystery of popery did even then work."

The convocation having finished the alterations in the Prayer-Book presented it to the king, who transmitted it to the house of lords with this message,—“That his majesty has duly considered of the alterations, and does with the advice of council fully approve and allow the same; which, in and by the intended act of uniformity, shall be appointed to be used by all that officiate in all cathedral and collegiate churches and chapels, under such sanctions or penalties as the parliament shall think fit.” Considerable opposition was raised in the house of lords against some of the alterations, but,

after the whole was gone through, the lord chancellor was directed to give the thanks of the house to the members of the convocation for the care they had taken, and to assure them that the amendments they had made were well received.

Before the act of uniformity was passed, the presbyterians felt the operation of its principle. At the assizes held at Exeter, in the month of March, the grand jury found bills of indictment against forty of the most eminent nonconformist ministers, for not reading the Common-Prayer, according to law. They also represented the itinerating of certain preachers, ejected out of sequestered livings, as dangerous to the peace of the nation, and stated, that their preaching in private houses, and to other congregations, tended to foment rebellion and involve the nation in a new war. To cover the designs of the court, and to reconcile the king's conduct towards the presbyterians with his declaration at Breda, the chancellor and his party were perpetually raising reports about plots and conspiracies against government; which, in fact, had no foundation. Upon the above reports was founded the necessity of passing the act of uniformity, by which admission into the ministry of the church of England was made more difficult than it was even before the civil war. The design of this was not developed all at once. It was a settled principle with the king to show all the favour he could to the papists; but to effect this, by displaying a more than ordinary zeal for

the protestant establishment, was the quintessence of "king-craft." The king had many papists in his confidence. There were also some ecclesiastics of high rank in the church who were not unfriendly to popery; and their design was so to oppress the dissenters that, to avoid another civil war, a toleration might be obtained, in the benefits of which the papists would be included. The dissenters also were secretly encouraged to maintain their ground, being assured that, from the king's temper and the state of trade, they would ultimately obtain a toleration.

In January, 1662, the famous act of uniformity passed through the house of commons with a majority of six. The bill met with more opposition from the lords, who proposed some amendments, which occasioned several conferences between the two houses. The result of these conferences being reported to the house of lords, they concurred with the commons, and the bill passed by a very small majority. It soon received the royal assent, and was to come into operation on the twenty-fourth of August following. The terms of conformity as stated in the bill are,—1. Re-ordination, if they had not been episcopally ordained before. 2. A declaration of their unfeigned assent and consent to all and every thing prescribed and contained in the Book of Common-Prayer, and administration of sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies of the church of England, together with the psalter, and the form and manner of making, ordaining,

and consecrating of bishops, priests, and deacons. 3. To take the oath of canonical obedience. 4. To abjure the solemn league and covenant, from which many conscientious ministers could not disentangle themselves. 5. To abjure the lawfulness of taking up arms against the king, or any commissioned by him, on any pretence whatever. These prescribed terms were to be signed and conformed to by every clergyman, lecturer, and schoolmaster, before St. Bartholomew's day, on pain of deprivation. A portion of that wisdom which is from beneath was evidently displayed in bringing the bill into operation on that day; for the tithes being usually paid at Michaelmas, those who did not conform would lose their income for the whole year. The massacre that took place in Paris ninety years before, on St. Bartholomew's day, was not forgotten by the presbyterians, nor did they hesitate at making a comparison.

This memorable act, with the amended Prayer-Book, was not published until the day before it was to be subscribed, so that only a few of the clergy in the vicinity of London could procure a sight of it, and all the rest must either subscribe to a book they had not seen, or forfeit their preferments in the church. Rather than sacrifice their livings, great numbers of the clergy subscribed to the book before they had seen it, as the bishops themselves acknowledged. But many of the most pious and conscientious ministers were of a different mind; and rather than subscribe to a book they had not

seen, or that they did not cordially approve, they submitted to the penalty. About two thousand were deprived for nonconformity, among whom were some of the most eminent divines and zealous preachers of that age; such as, Bates, Baxter, Calamy, Caryl, Charnock, Clarke, Flavel, Gale, Gilpin, Goodwin, Greenhill, P. Henry, Howe, Jackson, Jacomb, Jenkins, Manton, Mead, Newcomen, Owen, Pool, &c. &c., many of whose names will be known through their writings till time shall be no longer.

The episcopalian party rejoiced as those who had gained a great victory, although it was obtained at the expense of reducing such a number of eminent men and their families to extreme poverty; but they had not taken into consideration that such severe measures were sure to produce a re-action. A strong sympathy was excited throughout the nation towards the ejected ministers; and, regardless of consequences, great numbers determined to unite with them and form separate congregations. This was just the effect the king and the popish party wished it to produce. The king had promised some of the leading men among the presbyterians that if he passed the act of uniformity there should be inserted a clause of exemption. A few days after the act was passed they petitioned the king for liberty to continue in their ministerial functions. On the following day their petition was considered in council, when his majesty expressed himself in favour of an in-

dulgence; but the lord chancellor and archbishop Sheldon were both violently opposed to any proposition that would prevent the law from taking its course. The violent manner in which the bishops opposed the presbyterians, encouraged the papists to attempt putting their project into execution. For this purpose, the earl of Bristol convened a meeting of the principal papists at his house in London, and, having bound them by an oath to observe secrecy, he told them that the time was come for them to do something towards bringing in their religion. He therefore advised that all their interest should be used to procure a toleration for the nonconformists, in which themselves might be comprehended.

Whether the king was privy to this meeting of the papists is not certain; but it is clear that he was well acquainted with their object. His majesty prepared a declaration which he published at Christmas, without acquainting his ministers with his intention, in which he assures all his loving subjects "that as for all that concerns the penalties upon those who, living peaceably, do not conform to the church of England, through scruple or tenderness of misguided conscience, but modestly and without scandal perform their devotions in their own way, his majesty will make it his special care, as far as in him lies, without invading the freedom of parliament, to incline their wisdom at the next approaching session to concur with him in making some new act for that purpose

which may enable him to exercise, with more universal satisfaction, that power of dispensing which he conceives to be inherent in him ; " that as to the papists who had deserved so well from his father and himself, in adhering to them with their lives and fortunes, it was not his intention " to exclude them from all benefit of such an act of indulgence, but that they are not to expect an open toleration ; and he refers the manner of that indulgence to the approaching session of parliament, which he doubts not will concur with him in the performance of his promises."

This declaration was opposed to the views of all parties except the papists. Its ostensible object was the relief of the nonconformists, but they were too clear-sighted not to discover that their proposed relief was intended merely as a stepping-stone for the papists. The lord chancellor was greatly mortified at his majesty publishing the declaration before he was made acquainted with it, and he with the bishops violently opposed it in the council, but it was carried against them by a small majority ; and from that time the chancellor's interest began rapidly to decline at court. The superior policy of the papists was apparent by their close union with each other, and their labouring to weaken the protestant interest by inflaming the minds of the episcopal party against the nonconformists. Their object was either to obtain an indiscriminate toleration, or to raise a general prosecution.

The parliament met in February, 1663, and the king in his opening speech dwelt chiefly on the subject of his published declaration. He assured the house that though several of the papists might justly claim a share in that indulgence which he would willingly afford to other dissenters, yet he did not intend them to hold any places in the government; for he would not yield to any, no not to the bishops themselves, in his zeal for the protestant religion and his approval of the act of uniformity: and yet, if the dissenters would behave themselves peaceably under the government, he could heartily wish that he had such a power of indulgence to use on all occasions as might not needlessly force them out of the kingdom, or give them cause to conspire against the peace of it.

This speech excited a strong sensation of alarm in the house of commons. What was sought for by the king was not a law to relieve those who dissented from the church from conscientious motives; but for himself to be invested with a discretionary power to suspend the operation of the laws. A principle more derogatory to the real interest of the subject could not be established. The thanks of the house were voted to his majesty for resolving to maintain the act of uniformity; but the opinion of the house was that no indulgence should be granted to dissenters. In an address which the house presented to his majesty they assign the following reasons:—1. That it would establish schism by law, and nullify the censures of the church.

2. That it was unbecoming the wisdom of parliament to pass a law to enforce uniformity in one session, and in the next session pass another law to suspend its operation, the reasons continuing the same. 3. That it would expose his majesty to the restless importunities of every sect that might dissent from the established church. 4. That it would increase sectaries—weaken the protestant profession—be troublesome to the government—and that in time some powerful sect might contend for an establishment which might end in popery. 5. That it was unprecedented, and might take away the means of convicting recusants. 6. That as the indulgence would not tend to the peace but to the disturbance of the kingdom, the best way to produce a settled peace was to press vigorously the act of uniformity.

Had these reasons been presented alone, it is hard to say what effect they might have produced; *for the heart of kings is unsearchable.* But as they were accompanied with four subsidies from the commons, and as many from the convocation, his majesty made no further reply than, that his meaning was “not understood.”

The parliament which met in March, 1664, passed two acts, one to relieve all the ministers that were disposed to conform, but had been prevented by indisposition, or other unavoidable causes, from signing within the time prescribed by the act of uniformity. The other was an act for suppressing seditious conventicles. Rumours were at this time

circulated of a conspiracy being formed in the north, by the republican party and the nonconformists, whose object was to restore the long parliament. Upon this baseless fabric was founded the reasons for passing an act by which all persons peremptorily refusing to come to church were upon conviction to be condemned to banishment, and, in case of return, to death without benefit of clergy. It enacts further,—“ That if any person above the age of sixteen, after the first day of July, 1664, shall be present at any meeting, under colour or pretence of any exercise in religion, in any other manner than is allowed by the liturgy or practice of the church of England, where shall be present five or more persons not of the household, shall for the first offence suffer three months’ imprisonment, upon record made upon oath under the hand and seal of a justice of peace, or pay a sum not exceeding five pounds,—for the second offence, ten pounds,—and for the third offence, be banished to some of the American plantations (excepting New England and Virginia) for seven years, or pay one hundred pounds; or in case they return, or make their escape, such persons are to be adjudged felons, and suffer death without benefit of clergy.” By this act, sheriffs, magistrates, or others commissioned by them, were authorized to dissolve, dissipate, and break up all unlawful conventicles, and to put such of those present as they thought proper into custody. Persons allowing conventicles to be held in their houses or barns were liable to the same

penalties as other offenders. Married women detected at conventicles were to be imprisoned twelve months, unless their husbands would pay forty shillings for their redemption. This act was to continue in force for three years after the next session of parliament.

Soon after this act came into operation, the jails were crowded with protestant dissenters, whilst the papists were protected by the exercise of the prerogative. The discretionary power lodged by this act in the hands of the civil magistrates was never more improperly applied. Some of the basest characters the country could produce were employed as informers. Several ministers who had not taken the prescribed oath were prosecuted for preaching in their own houses to a few of their parishioners after attending at the public service of their respective churches. Warrants were issued by the magistrates for levying twenty pounds upon the minister, twenty pounds upon the house, and five shillings upon each hearer. If the money was not immediately paid, their houses were broken open and a seizure made of their effects; goods and wares were taken out of their shops,—and in the country, cattle were driven away and sold for half their value: and, if the seizure did not produce the amount of the fine, the minister and people were thrown into prison, and kept in close confinement for three or six months at the option of the magistrate. Whilst every thing was done that men invested with almost unlimited power, and influenced

by a settled enmity against dissenters could devise, to prevent the most faithful ministers of Christ from preaching the gospel, the common people were left to indulge without restraint in the greatest excesses of dissipation, profane swearing, gaming, and all kinds of uncleanness. Notwithstanding the arbitrary proceedings of the magistrates, and the intolerant manner in which their agents treated the dissenters, the three principal bodies, the independents, anabaptists, and quakers resolved that they would patiently submit to the penalties imposed, rather than try to evade them by occasional conformity. They assigned as their reason for so acting that, if a persecuting spirit were the mark of a false church, they should be highly culpable in joining with one that was so notoriously guilty.

The years 1664 and 1665 were marked with many inauspicious events. The king, without any just cause, declared war against Holland, which terminated without honour or advantage to England. The jails were at this time crowded with pious ministers, and other praying people, whilst many others, through fear of being sent thither, durst not so much as ask a blessing upon their food, when there were more than five persons at the table besides their own family. These violent proceedings against the dissenters were not the only calamities with which the nation was at that time visited. A long drought, which was followed by a destructive murrain among the cattle, preceded the break-

ing out of the plague, which raged to such an alarming extent, that in the city and suburbs of London from eight to ten thousand died in a week. Trade was completely at a stand. All intercourse between London and the country was cut off, through fear of conveying the infection. If a person from town passed through the country, he was avoided as an enemy. Many of the houses and shops in London that were shut up were marked with a red cross, and had the following inscription over the door, "Lord, have mercy upon us." Every night the bellman went his round with a cart, crying, "Bring out your dead." Notwithstanding all the precaution that was used to prevent it, the deadly contagion spread into several towns and villages, and continued its ravages about three-quarters of a year, until it had carried off nearly one hundred thousand persons. Many of the churches were shut up, and great numbers of the clergy fled into the country at a time when their services were most wanted. This induced several of the ejected ministers to occupy the vacant pulpits, concluding that such an extraordinary occasion would justify their violation of the law. This was indeed the most awful visitation ever witnessed in England. Many who attended divine worship at the church one day were thrown into their graves the next. Death rode in triumph on his pale horse. But there is reason to believe that this awful visitation was sanctified unto many. Numbers who had lived in the most criminal neglect of every

Christian duty might now be heard earnestly inquiring, "What must I do to be saved?"

The plague continuing to rage, the king removed his court to Salisbury; but it was not long before the deadly disease made its appearance there also, on which the court immediately removed to Oxford, where the parliament met in 1665. The spirit and maxims of popish policy had a predominating influence in the proceedings of this parliament. If a popish country be visited with any particular calamity, it is generally ascribed to their want of zeal in punishing heretics. Posterity will scarcely credit the fact, that a protestant British parliament should draw arguments from the failure of the war, and the raging of the plague, for inflicting still greater severities on the dissenters, by passing one of the most execrable acts that ever disgraced the British statute-book. By this act every silenced minister was required to take an oath that it was not lawful, on any pretence whatever, to take arms against his majesty, or any commissioned by him; and that they would not at any time attempt an alteration in the government of either church or state. This act further enjoined, "that no nonconformist ministers shall, after the 24th of March, 1665, unless in passing the road, come or be within five miles of any city, town corporate, or borough that sends members to parliament, or within five of any parish, town, or place wherein they have, since the act of oblivion, been parson, vicar, or lecturer, &c., or

where they have preached in any conventicle, on any pretence whatever, before they have taken and subscribed the above-said oath, before the justices of peace at their quarter sessions for the county in open court, upon forfeiture for every such offence of the sum of forty pounds; one-third to the king, another third to the poor, and a third to him that shall sue for it. And it is further enacted that such as shall refuse taking the aforesaid oath shall be incapable of teaching any public or private schools, or of taking any boarders or tablers to be taught or instructed, under pain of forty pounds, to be distributed as above. Any two justices of the peace, upon oath made before them of any offence committed against this act, are empowered to commit the offender to prison for six months without bail or mainprise." Great opposition was raised against this bill in both houses. The earl of Southampton declared that the oath was unjustifiable in itself, and such as no honest man could take.

The operation of the five-mile act, as it was generally called, proved extremely oppressive to the nonconformists. In many countries it was very difficult to find places to which they could retire to be exempt from the penalty. Some landlords were afraid to let them a house, lest they should be suspected of favouring their cause; and others took advantage of the ministers' necessities, and advanced their rents above what they were able to give. Some of the ministers were removed thirty or forty

miles from their flocks, whom they used to visit in the dead of night, and preach to them in some sequestered place, and return again before day-light. There were others who continued to preach openly wherever they could meet with a congregation, thinking it more in character with their profession as Christian ministers to perish in prison for preaching the gospel, than, through fear of suffering, to hide themselves in obscurity. Some few of the ministers, after enduring these severities for a time, took the oath contrary to their former resolution; but the main body of the dissenters remained firm to their principles. The wives and families of many of the ejected ministers were treated with the most wanton barbarity by the informers and soldiers, when they could not meet with the ministers. Though many of these faithful men and their families were reduced to the lowest ebb of poverty, not one of them was known to perish for want. They were often supplied with the necessaries of life from such unexpected sources as clearly marked the merciful interposition of divine Providence on their behalf. The facts recorded in the memoirs of some of these men are striking illustrations of this position, and are founded upon unquestionable authority.

Whilst both the civil and ecclesiastical authorities were oppressing the dissenters in the most unchristian-like manner, it pleased divine Providence to suffer a great part of the city of London to be laid in ashes by a dreadful fire, which broke out in

a baker's house in Pudding-lane, on the second day of September, 1666, behind where the monument now stands. The fire raged with unabating fury for three days, baffling all attempts to arrest its progress till it had consumed thirteen thousand two hundred dwelling houses, eighty-nine churches, including the cathedral of St. Paul, many schools, libraries, and other public buildings. On the fourth day it stopped, as by miracle, in the midst of the most combustible matter. Though the loss of property was immense, by a merciful Providence there was very little loss of life. The origin of this destructive fire is still involved in mystery; but that it was the work of an incendiary there is scarcely the shadow of a doubt. The papists are charged with being the authors, whoever they might employ as their agents; but this charge was never substantiated, although circumstantial evidence was very strong in its support. One Hubert, a French papist, who was apprehended in Essex as he was endeavouring to make his escape out of the kingdom, confessed that he had kindled the fire, and persisted in this declaration to his death; for he was condemned and executed on his own evidence. There were, however, so many incoherences in his statements, that some thought him a little deranged. To remove all scruples on that ground, he was blindfolded and taken to different parts of the city, and, on the bandages being removed, he was asked to look round and see if that was the place where the fire was kindled, when, after making his obser-

vations, he said that was not the place. But, on being brought to the place where the fire broke out, he at once declared that was the true place. An objection has been raised against the probability of such a person being employed on a business that involved such serious consequences. The force of this objection is however at once removed by a fact related by archbishop Tillotson, of a Mr. Langhorn, a popish counsellor, who for many years passed for a protestant. Before the restoration, Tillotson was present when Langhorn employed a half-witted man to go and manage the elections in Kent. Tillotson asked Langhorn how he could employ such a man in such a service. He replied it was a maxim with him to employ none but half-witted men in dangerous enterprises, provided they could keep a secret and obey orders. For, if they should turn informers instead of agents, it would be easy to discredit their discoveries, by showing that they were mad, and not likely to be trusted in any critical affairs. But the most suspicious circumstance is that related by Dr. Loyd, and recorded in bishop Burnet's history of his own times. It is in substance as follows:—The countess of Clarendon had a large number of shares in the New River water-works. One Grant, a papist, knowing that Dr. Loyd had considerable interest with the countess, applied to the doctor to get him appointed her agent, as he could greatly increase her revenues from that state. His proposals were accepted, and he was appointed one of the board for managing the

concern, which gave him authority to visit the works at Islington, whenever he thought proper. On the day before the fire broke out, he called at the office for the key of the place where the heads of the pipes were, and turned all the cocks that were open, thereby preventing the water from flowing to the city; he then returned and took the keys with him. Next morning, when the fire broke out, the pipes were turned in the streets, but there was no water. It was several hours before water could be got into the city, as it was necessary to send to Islington and then break open the door before the cocks could be turned. Grant denied having turned the cocks, but admitted taking the keys, though not by design. But the officer of the works affirmed that according to order he had left all the pipes running, and that no person had had the keys from him but Grant. Whether it was on account of some difficulties in the case, or the want of disposition on the part of those in power to enter upon a more close investigation, cannot at this distance of time be ascertained. Grant, however, passed with impunity.

The spirit of persecution which had so long raged against the dissenters had in a great measure spent itself by its own violence, without producing on the minds of the people generally sentiments more favourable to the established church. The sword of persecution frequently cuts both ways. It produced sympathy towards the sufferers, and regard for that cause in which such

hardships had been so patiently endured, and the zeal of the nonconformists, contrasted with the indolence of many of the ministers in the established church, led numbers to think more favourably of dissent. On the other hand, the indulgences granted to the papists by the court induced many who had passed for protestants to cast off the mask, and marshal themselves under the banner of St. Peter.

The progress which popery and infidelity were making in the land began to alarm the most wise and moderate friends of the established church, and a project was formed by the lord-keeper Bridgman, lord chief Justice Hale, bishops Watkins and Reynolds, doctors Burton, Tillotson, Stillingfleet, and others, for a few abatements to be made in favour of such as could be brought into the church, and a toleration for the rest. This wise and merciful measure was violently opposed by some of the bishops, who stated that if what was proposed should be granted to the presbyterians, it was impossible to say what they would next demand. To prevent all further interference in their favour, when the parliament met it was rumoured that a comprehension and indulgence were to be granted to the presbyterians, upon which a vote was passed prohibiting any man from introducing a bill for that purpose into the house. Sheldon, archbishop of Canterbury, was not only against any relief being afforded to the nonconformists, but he wrote a circular

letter to the bishops of his province requiring them to furnish him with a particular account of all the conventicles in their several dioceses, the number that attended them, and whether they might be easily suppressed by the civil magistrate. On receiving the required information, he prevailed upon the king to publish a proclamation for executing the laws against dissenters, especially what is called the five-mile act. By these proceedings, the spirit of persecution, which for a time had laid dormant, was again roused, with all its attendant oppressions. A committee was appointed by the house of commons to inquire into the conduct of the nonconformists; and the report was, that several conventicles and other seditious meetings were held in the vicinity of that house, in defiance of the laws, and endangering the peace of the kingdom. Upon this report the court commissioned General Monk to break up all those private meetings, which for a time had been held by connivance. Among others who felt the lash of the oppressor's rod was the Rev. Richard Baxter, who was committed to Clerkenwell prison for preaching to a few people in his own house, having previously refused taking the prescribed oath; but upon demanding an *habeas corpus*, his mittimus was declared invalid for want of naming the witnesses. The magistrates were greatly mortified at their own remissness, and issued out another mittimus to have him sent to Newgate; but Baxter wisely kept himself out of the way.

The spirit of the leading men in parliament was violently opposed to any accommodation or relief being afforded to the dissenters. The conventicle act having expired, it was again brought into parliament, and passed both houses with the two following additional clauses,—“That if any justice of the peace refuse to do his duty in the execution of this act he shall forfeit five pounds.”—And “that all clauses in this act shall be construed most largely and beneficially for suppressing conventicles, and for the justification of all persons to be employed in the execution thereof.” That an act with such oppressive clauses should receive the royal assent is not at all strange, considering the character of Charles II., who would pass almost any act the parliament would present, provided they supplied him with plenty of money to enable him to meet the insatiable demands of his numerous mistresses. That the king often acted contrary to his better judgment, in compliance with the wishes of the ecclesiastics, may safely be inferred from what he once said when conversing with bishop Burnet. When speaking on the state of the church, the king said, “If the clergy had acted their parts, it had been easy to run down the nonconformists; but they will do nothing, and will have me to do every thing; and most of them do worse than if they did nothing. I had,” said he, “a very honest chaplain, to whom I gave a living in Suffolk that was full of nonconformists; but he was a very great blockhead, and yet he has brought all his

parish to church ; I cannot imagine what he could say to them, for he was a very silly fellow, but he has been about from house to house, and I suppose his nonsense has suited their nonsense ; and, in reward for his diligence, I have given him a bishopric in Ireland."

The operation of this new conventicle act had a most baneful effect on the minds and morals of the public. The clause which stated "that if any doubt arose respecting the meaning of the act it was to be determined in the sense most opposed to conventicles," gave encouragement to the vilest characters to become informers, and live upon the labours of the most peaceable members of the community. Many industrious families were reduced to absolute poverty by those vile miscreants, who plundered their houses, carried away their goods and chattels and sold them, and immured their persons in prisons. Several conscientious magistrates resigned their commissions rather than be made the instruments of such cruelties. These violent proceedings could not long be endured in any civilized country. Many merchants and respectable tradesmen removed with their families and business into Holland, and many others were preparing to go, when the king ordered the suspension of such severities. Of all who suffered under the operation of this act, the conduct of the Friends was the most remarkable. They regularly assembled at their usual time and place, and, when the officers came to seize them, not one of them would attempt

to avoid them by leaving the place. They would go to prison *en masse*; nor would they petition to be set at liberty, pay the fines imposed, nor even the jailer's fees. When they were set at liberty, they went as before to their meeting-house, and, when the doors were shut up by order of the civil or military officers, they assembled in the street before the doors, saying that they were neither ashamed nor afraid to meet together in a peaceable manner to worship God; but, in imitation of the prophet Daniel, they would do it the more publicly because they were forbidden. Such a mode of proceeding was by some called obstinacy,—by others firmness; but, by whatever name it is designated, they carried their point, for the government became weary of contending with so much resolution.

We insert the following narrative, as it presents a fair specimen of the manner in which the Friends, and other dissenters, were treated when brought into court. William Penn and William Mead were at that time the two principal speakers among the Friends. "They were tried at the Old Bailey for an unlawful and tumultuous assembly in the open street, wherein they spake or preached to the people who were assembled in Grace-church-street, to the number of three or four hundred, in contempt of the king's laws, and to the disturbance of the peace." The prisoners pleaded *not guilty*; but the treatment they met with was such an outrage of all decency and order as has but

rarely disgraced a court of justice in a civilized country. They were each fined forty marks for coming into court with their hats on, though it was not done out of contempt, but from a religious principle. It appeared, from the depositions of the witnesses, that there was an assembly in Grace-church-street, but there was neither riot, tumult, nor force of arms. Mr. Penn confessed that they were so far from recanting, or declining to vindicate the assembling themselves to preach, pray, or worship God, that they declared to all the world they believed it to be their duty, and that all the powers on earth should not divert them from it. When it was said that they were not arraigned for worshipping God, but for breaking the law, William Penn affirmed he had broken no law, and challenged the recorder to tell him upon what law he was prosecuted. The recorder answered, upon the common law; but did not inform him where that common law was to be found. Penn insisted upon his producing the law, but the court overruled him, and called him a troublesome fellow. Penn replied, "I design no affront to the court, but if you deny to acquaint me with the law you say I have broken, you deny me the right that is due to every Englishman, and evidence to the world that your designs are arbitrary." Upon saying this, he was haled from the bar into the bail-dock. As he was going out he said to the jury, "If these fundamental laws which relate to liberty and property must not be indispensably maintained,

who can say that he has a right to the coat upon his back? Certainly then our liberties are openly to be invaded, our wives to be ravished, our children enslaved, and our estates led away in triumph, by every sturdy beggar and malicious informer, as their trophies."

William Mead, being left alone at the bar, said, "You men of the jury, I am accused of meeting, by force of arms, in a tumultuous manner. Time was when I had freedom to use a carnal weapon, and then I feared no man; but now I fear God, and dare not make use thereof, nor hurt any man. I am a peaceable man, and therefore demand to know upon what law my indictment is founded. If the recorder will not tell what makes a riot, Coke will tell him that it is when three or more are met together to beat a man, or to enter forcibly into another man's lands, to cut his grass or wood, or break down his pales." Upon this the recorder, having lost all patience, pulled off his hat, and said, "I thank you, Sir, for telling me what the law is." Mead replied, "Thou mayest put on thy hat; I have no fee for thee now." Starling, the Mayor, told him that he deserved to have his tongue cut out, and ordered him also to be carried to the bail-dock. When the prisoners were gone, the recorder gave the jury their charge, upon which William Penn stood up, and with a loud voice said, "I appeal to the jury, and this great assembly, whether it be not contrary to the undoubted right of every Englishman to give the

jury their charge in the absence of the prisoners." The recorder answered with a sneer, "Ye are present; ye do hear, do ye not?" Penn answered, "No thanks to the court. I have ten or twelve material points to offer in order to invalidate the indictment, but am not heard." The recorder cried out in a rage, "Pull him down, pull the fellow down." Mead replied, "These are barbarous and unjust proceedings;" when they were both silenced by being thrust into the hole.

After the jury had been withdrawn an hour and a half, the prisoners were brought to the bar to hear their verdict,—when eight of them came down agreed, but four remained above, to whom they used the most intimidating language, particularly to Mr. Bushel, whom they charged with being the cause of their disagreement. At length, after withdrawing a second time, they agreed to bring them in guilty of speaking in Grace-church-street; but the court would not accept it for a verdict; and, after insulting them in the grossest manner, told them they should be locked up without meat, drink, fire, or tobacco; nay, they should starve, unless they brought in a proper verdict. William Penn, being at the bar, said, "My jury ought not to be thus treated. We were by force of arms kept out of our own meeting-house, and met as near it as the soldiers would give us leave. We are a peaceable people, and cannot offer violence to any man." And, looking at the jury, he said, "You are Englishmen;

mind your privileges; give not away your right." To which some of them answered, "Nor will we ever do it." Upon this they were shut up all night without victuals, or fire, or any other convenience. Next morning they brought in the same verdict, upon which they were threatened with the severest resentment. The Mayor said he would cut Bushel's throat as soon as he could. The recorder said he never knew the benefit of an inquisition till now; and that the next session of parliament a law would be made wherein those that would not conform should not have the benefit of the law. The court having obliged the jury to withdraw again, they were kept without meat and drink till the following morning, when they brought in the prisoners not guilty, for which they were each fined forty marks, and to be imprisoned till it was paid. The prisoners were also remanded to Newgate for their fines for coming into court with their hats on. The jury, after some time, were discharged by *habeas corpus* returnable in the common pleas, where their commitment was judged illegal.

The affairs of the nation were evidently drawing towards a crisis. In every part of the kingdom the protestant dissenters were treated in the most cruel manner. This was rendered the more intolerable by the marked difference shown in favour of the papists, who were allowed the liberty of attending mass at the houses of foreign ambassadors, and other chapels both in town and country. The

duke of York, the king's brother, and next heir to the crown, about this time made a formal abjuration of the protestant religion, and declared himself a Roman catholic. The duke was a man of no religious principle, consequently to him all religions were alike, and he now made his profession in favour of that system which could best accommodate itself to his interest. The king had a number of children by his mistresses, but none by the queen to succeed him to the throne. Report stated that it was in contemplation to obtain a divorce for the king, that he might marry another queen, and thereby set aside the duke's succession. Whether such a measure was really intended is doubtful; however, the Roman catholics availed themselves of the credit attached to the report, and told the duke that they had no doubt but the divorce might be effected, and that they would use all their influence to promote its accomplishment, unless he would make a public profession of the Roman catholic religion; which from that time he openly did.

From this period the Roman catholics increased so rapidly that the parliament became alarmed for the consequences; and both houses joined in an address to the king, representing the causes, and suggesting the following remedies:—"First, that a proclamation be issued to banish all popish priests and Jesuits out of the realm, except such as attend the queen and foreign ambassadors.—Secondly, that the king's subjects be forbid going to hear

mass and other exercises of the Romish religion.—Thirdly. That no office or employment of public authority be put into the hands of popish recusants.—Fourthly. That all fraternities, convents, and popish schools be abolished, and the Jesuits, priests, friars, and schoolmasters punished.—Fifthly. That his majesty require all the officers of the exchequer to issue out processes against popish recusants convict, certified thither.—Sixthly. That Plunket, the pretended primate of Ireland, and Talbot, archbishop of Dublin, be sent into England, to answer such matters as shall be objected against them."

This address was graciously received by the king, who after some time published a declaration, but the magistrates knew that the king never intended that part of it to be executed which related to the Roman catholics, so they suffered it to lie as a dead letter. This proclamation was soon followed by another of a very different character, as its projectors intended by it to pave the way for establishing popery and absolute power. By this proclamation liberty of conscience was granted, as well as the suspension of all penal laws against nonconformists. This indulgence was not granted out of love to the dissenters, but to set them against the church, to offer them the protection of the crown, and thereby open the way for a general toleration. The dissenters were far from approving of the *dispensing power*, being fully aware that the indulgence would not be continued

to them any longer than it might serve the interests of popery. However, there were several ministers, both in town and country, that took out licences, and great numbers attended their ministry, but all were afraid of consequences.

The king convened another parliament, which met in February, 1673. In his opening speech he told them he had found the good effect of his indulgence to dissenters, but it was a mistake in those who said that more liberty was given to papists than to others, because they had only freedom in their own houses, and no public assemblies;—he should therefore take it ill to receive contradiction in what he had done:—"And to deal plainly with you," said his majesty, "I am resolved to stick to my declaration." The sentiments of the king were echoed by lord chancellor Shaftsbury in a flaming speech, in which he exerted all his rhetorical powers in magnifying the king's zeal for the church of England and the protestant religion. But both speeches failed to produce the desired effect. The commons saw that the liberties of the subject were involved in the dispensing power, and argued the case thus,—that though the king had power to pardon offenders, he had not a right to authorize men to break the laws; for this would imply a power to change the government; and if the king could indemnify offenders beforehand, it was in vain to make laws, as they would have no force but at the king's discretion. This subject was warmly debated in the

house of commons, and, in their address to his majesty, they informed him that penal laws in matters ecclesiastical could not be suspended but by an act of parliament; and therefore they humbly besought his majesty to give such directions as that no apprehensions or jealousies might remain in the hearts of his faithful subjects. The king, in his answer to their address, expressed his regret that they should call in question his power in ecclesiastical affairs, which had not been done in the reigns of his ancestors, and stated that he did not pretend to suspend laws wherein the properties, rights, or liberties of his subjects were concerned, nor to alter any thing in the established religion, but only to take off the penalties inflicted on dissenters, which he believed they themselves would not wish to be executed according to the rigour of the law.

The dissatisfaction between the king and the parliament now became mutual. As the king expressed his determination to abide by his declaration, the commons suspended the discussion on the money-bill, and presented another address, in which they unanimously requested his majesty to give them a full and satisfactory answer to their last address, and to take such effectual order that his majesty's conduct in this affair might not be drawn into example for the future. The dissenters on this occasion displayed a noble spirit of patriotism. When the subject of the dispensing power was debated in the house, alderman Love,

member for the city of London, and a leading man among the presbyterians, stood up and declared, that he would rather go without his own desired liberty, than have it in a way that would prove so destructive to the liberties of the country; and the protestant interest,—and that this was the sentiment of the main body of dissenters. This speech gave a turn to the feelings of the house in favour of the dissenters. When they found that the people against whom, year after year, they had been passing the severest laws, would at such a crisis sacrifice their own liberties for the preservation of the protestant religion, and the liberties of their country, they felt that it was proper to put a mark of distinction between them and the Roman catholics. A bill was brought in to take off the penalties of the act of uniformity, and impose nothing more upon the dissenters than the oaths of allegiance and supremacy. This bill passed through the commons in a short time; but it was detained so long by the proposed amendments in the house of lords, that his majesty prorogued the parliament before the bill was ready to receive the royal assent.

The king had never before found the affairs of the nation in such a critical and perplexing state; involved in an expensive war,—the exchequer shut up,—trade at a stand,—the protestants laying aside their long-fomented feuds, and making a firm stand against popery by refusing to pass the money-bill, unless the king would annul his declar-

ation, and allow the laws to be enforced against the papists. The king now discovered that he must either dissolve the parliament, and run the risk of another civil war by raising money without them, or he must pass the bills they had prepared for the suppression of popery. It was certainly a delicate part which the king was called to act. His brother, the heir apparent to the crown, had openly professed the catholic faith; and not only the queen, but many of the most influential persons in his court, were of the same creed.

After deliberating a few days, and consulting with the duke of York, his ministers, and those who had the preponderating influence in his councils, his mistresses, he went to the parliament house, broke the seal of the declaration with his own hand, and there faithfully promised that what he had done in that particular should not, for the future, be drawn into example; and that he would willingly pass any bills they should offer him that would give them satisfaction in all their just grievances. The king's answer gave such perfect satisfaction that the commons immediately voted him a very large supply of money; and, that he might not have time to forget his promise, they directed a bill to be brought in requiring all persons holding places of profit or trust to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy in public court, to receive the sacrament in the established church,—to be certified by the minister and churchwardens and attested on the oaths of two respect-

able witnesses,—to subscribe a declaration that they “believe that there is no transubstantiation in the sacrament of the Lord’s supper, at or after the consecration thereof, by any person whatsoever.” This has generally been called the Test Act. In passing this bill through the house of commons, it was powerfully opposed by the court party. They endeavoured to divide the church party, by proposing a clause to exempt protestant dissenters. But their drift in proposing the clause was soon discovered; when alderman Love again rose, and said that he hoped the clause proposed in favour of dissenters would not be insisted upon,—that he should move for the bill to pass in its present state, and leave the dissenters to suffer the severity of the laws, rather than their concerns should interfere with what was calculated to prove such an effectual barrier against popery. This manly declaration defeated the purposes of the court party, and the bill passed through the commons with very little more opposition. The ministers brought all their force to bear against it in the house of lords; but, though it was debated in the presence of the king and the duke of York, it was carried by a considerable majority. After giving his royal assent to the test act, his majesty prorogued the parliament.

The danger apprehended of popery again gaining an establishment in England was the ground on which the test act was founded. Such a test was what the wisdom of parliament conceived the

only effectual antidote they could devise. But to make the receiving of the sacrament in the parish church a qualifying test for civil offices has been considered by many of the wisest and best divines in the church of England as a gross prostitution of that divinely-instituted ordinance. This act continued to occupy its place in the statute-book of the realm for the space of one hundred and fifty-five years, until it was repealed by an act passed in the year 1828.

The affairs of the nation daily grew worse and worse, as might naturally have been expected from the operation of the test act, which disqualified every person who refused to subscribe the declaration from prosecuting an action in any court of law or equity,—from being guardian of any child, or executor or administrator to any person,—from taking any legacy or deed of gift, and from holding any public office; besides imposing a fine of five hundred pounds. The test act was intended to bear chiefly against the Roman catholics, and would not have passed if the dissenters could have been brought to support the measures of the court; but, as they had resolutely resisted all attempts to form such a coalescence, the act was brought to bear on them in its utmost rigour. This compelled many pious and respectable families to leave their native country, to seek in a distant land the liberty of worshipping God agreeably to the dictates of conscience, without being subject to such heavy fines, or liable to be shut up in prison, to the ruin of their families.

Soon after peace had been concluded with the Dutch, a discovery was made of a formidable plot to take away the king's life—to give the crown to the duke of York as a gift from the pope, under whom he was to hold it in fee—and to extirpate the protestant religion out of the land. This was called the "popish plot," from its being formed by pope Innocent XI., cardinal Howard, his legate, and the generals of the Jesuits in Spain and at Rome. It enters not into the plan of this work to trace all the circumstances of the affair; however, we may just remark that, notwithstanding the suspicious character of Oates and Bedloe, on whose evidence it principally rested, there were so many corroborating circumstances, such as the ambiguous letters found upon some of the Jesuits,—the murder of Sir E. Godfrey, an active protestant magistrate,—and the depositions of several others, that, if the king's life was not immediately aimed at, little doubt can be entertained that a serious plot was formed, the object of which was to subvert the constitution and introduce popery. From the various circumstances which came out in evidence on the trials, as related by Burnet, in his history of his own times, the parliament was perfectly satisfied of the existence of such a plot, and, whilst making preparation for meeting the case in a prompt and efficient manner, the king, to avoid a certain mortification, dissolved the parliament, after a continuance of eighteen years, and summoned a new one to meet in March, 1679.

The popish plot had fixed a brand of infamy on the whole body of Roman catholics, to remove which they got up a *sham protestant plot*, and charged it upon the presbyterians. The management of this plot was intrusted to one Dangerfield, a papist of most infamous character, who had just got out of prison through the interest of a Mrs. Cellier, a woman of ill-fame, who introduced him to the countess of Powis, whose husband was in the Tower for the popish plot, and with her assistance he formed the whole scheme. They employed a number of mercenaries to bring news from all parts of the town, and, having obtained a long list of the names of the principal protestant nobility and gentry, Dangerfield wrote treasonable letters to them, to be left at the houses of the nonconformists and other active protestants in several parts of England, that, search being made upon other pretences, when the letters were found, they might be apprehended for treason. At the same time he obtruded himself into the company of some of the most zealous enemies of popery in town, and then informed the king and the duke of York that a commission had been offered him,—that a new form of government was to be set up.—and that the king and royal family were to be banished. The story was readily received, and Dangerfield was rewarded with a present and a pension to carry on his correspondence. Having formed an acquaintance with colonel Mansel, in Westminster, he made up a bundle of seditious letters, and,

having deposited them in a corner of Mansel's room, he sent officers under a pretence of searching for prohibited goods, but they only brought away the bundle of letters. Upon examination, the letters were proved to be forgeries, on which Dangerfield was deprived of his pension and sent to Newgate. On searching Mrs. Cellier's house, a book was found in a meal-tub, which contained the whole scheme of the plot, whence it obtained the name of the *meal-tub plot*. Dangerfield, finding his case desperate, had recourse to a common expedient, that of exonerating himself by implicating his employers. He published an account of the whole affair, in which he exposed all their proceedings, and declared that he was employed by the popish lords in the tower, with the countess of Powis, to invent the meal-tub plot, which was to have thrown the popish plot wholly upon the presbyterians. Dangerfield was pardoned and sent out of the kingdom ; but, returning to England without permission in king James's reign, he was tried and sentenced to be whipped from Newgate to Tyburn ; and in his return thence was murdered in a coach.

Such was the agitated state of London, in consequence of the trials and executions concerning the popish-plot, that the king on calling a new parliament, in 1681, appointed it to meet at Oxford. In his opening speech he declared that nothing should be wanting on his part to give them the fullest satisfaction they could wish, for

the security of the protestant religion, consistent with preserving the succession of the crown in its due and legal course. But the king's promises did not prevent the commons from bringing in and passing a bill of exclusion, which, however, was lost in the house of lords by a majority of thirty-three. The parliament manifested a disposition to relieve the dissenters by a comprehension, and by enacting that such protestants as could not be comprehended should have a toleration, and be exempt from the penal statutes on condition of subscribing a declaration of allegiance, and of assembling with open doors. But, though the bill was committed, it did not pass the house, another being proposed in its stead, entitled, "An act to exempt his majesty's protestant subjects, dissenting from the church of England, from the penalties imposed upon the papists by the act of 35th Elizabeth. By the above act, the nonconformists were adjudged to perpetual imprisonment, or obliged to depart the realm never to return. This severe law had lain dormant almost eighty years, but was now threatened to be put in execution by the high church party. The bill was carried in the commons by a large majority, but went more tardily through the house of lords; but when the bill should have been presented to the king for the royal assent, it was not to be found, the clerk of the crown having, by order of the king, withdrawn it from the table. The king, being unwilling either to pass the bill or refuse it, had recourse to

this mean artifice, which was more mortifying to the country than if it had been openly rejected. The general inference from this fact is, that the king never intended to grant any indulgence to the protestant dissenters but what would prove more advantageous to the Roman catholics.

The morning before the parliament was prorogued two votes of rather an extraordinary nature were unanimously passed. "1. Resolved, that it is the opinion of this house that the acts of parliament made in the reigns of Elizabeth and king James against popish recusants ought not to be extended against protestant dissenters. 2. Resolved, that it is the opinion of this house that the prosecution of protestant dissenters upon the penal laws is at this time grievous to the subject, weakening to the protestant interest, an encouragement to popery, and dangerous to the peace of the kingdom." However pure the motives of those who moved these resolutions, they were ill-timed, and the passing of them under existing circumstances did the dissenters a great disservice. At the end of seven days the king dissolved the parliament, and never called another. For the last four years of his life he governed in the most arbitrary and despotic manner, and became as notorious for his cruelty as he had before been for his apparent humanity.

For a detailed and circumstantial account of the persecutions and sufferings of the dissenters, during the remainder of this reign, we refer the

reader to the works written on that subject by Calamy and Neal. It is sufficient here to say that the civil magistrates and the ministers of religion seemed to vie with each other in their endeavours to crush the dissenters. In their zeal to suppress dissent, popery was lost sight of, as though it had grown harmless with age. But the lion may lie couchant in his lair, when his nature is not changed into that of a lamb. He only waits there till an opportunity offers for him to pounce upon his prey. We implicitly believe the Roman catholic when he asserts that his church is unchanged and unchangeable. It cannot be changed without destroying the basis on which its lofty pretensions is built, INFALLIBILITY.

The king was meditating a change of measures, when he was seized with his last affliction. The popish party was much alarmed at this, fearing it might affect the succession. The king was suddenly seized with a kind of apoplexy, under such circumstances as gave sufficient ground to suspect that he was poisoned. He died on the 6th of February, 1685, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, and the twenty-third of his reign.

Charles II. appears to have been possessed of fine natural parts, a lively imagination, and a sound judgment in affairs of state. With such qualifications for governing, he might have rendered himself greatly beloved by his people. But for his conduct on many occasions no apology can be made. His dissimulation in religion was truly

awful ; for, whilst professing zeal for the protestant church, he was externally a papist, and internally a deist. His maxim was that there was no such thing as either honour or virtue in the world, but that all men were actuated by motives of self-interest. His indolent habits prevented him attending to the affairs of government, which he left to his ministers, whilst he spent his time with his mistresses in the most debasing sensuality. To support his extravagances, with the crown of England on his head, he became the tool and pensioner of France. Though he made many concessions to his subjects, his reign was to himself very inglorious. He was beloved by none whilst he lived, and his death was lamented only because it introduced a worse man than himself to the throne.

CHAPTER VII.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF JAMES, II.; IN 1685, TO
HIS ABDICATION IN 1688.

The court soon published the death of Charles, by proclaiming the duke of York by the name of James II. On their return his majesty made a speech to the court, in which he expressed his good opinion of the church of England, and pledged himself to "govern in church and state as it is now established by law." The speech was soon printed and extensively circulated. The wise and experienced part of the nation knew how to estimate such a pledge, but many others were elated beyond all bounds of moderation. The praises of the new king resounded from the pulpits in every part of the kingdom; and numerous addresses were presented with all the commendatory expressions of loyalty which the most fulsome flattery could invent. The university of Oxford, in their address, took the lead in servile adulation, promising to obey the king "without limitation or restriction," and that no consideration whatsoever should shake their loyalty and allegiance. The clergy of the city of London received a marked expression of his majesty's disapprobation, for a sentence in their address which the court construed into a menace; namely, "our religion established by law, which is dearer to us than our lives."

Notwithstanding the flattering promises James had made in his first court speech, his conduct soon convinced the most sceptical that he intended to govern without law, and to establish popery. These sentiments he fully expressed in his first speech from the throne, when he told them that he did not approve of frequent parliaments, and that the only way to induce him to meet them often was to use him well. In plain terms,—if they would secure him ample revenues, he would govern the nation without parliaments. The arbitrary spirit that breathes through the king's speech is not more at variance with English freedom than the pusillanimity of this parliament, who, as if eager to chain the rights and liberties of the subject to the throne of a despot, rivetted their own fetters by granting him for life all the vast revenues of his late majesty, amounting to more than two millions per annum. On the subject of his own religion, he acted without any reserve; for on the second Sunday after his accession to the throne, he went openly to mass with all the ensigns of royalty, in direct violation of the laws of the land. He directed Huddleston the popish priest to announce publicly that he had administered the eucharist and extreme unction to Charles II., who had died a Roman catholic.

The parliament presented an address to his majesty, praying him to publish his royal proclamation for the penal laws to be put in force against dissenters from the church of England. Their address

was most carefully worded for fear of offending the king, by any expressions which might appear intended to include the Roman catholics. The king was too well versed in the arts of papal policy not to grant their request. He knew that the most essential service he could render the church of Rome would be to encourage the protestants to persecute each other. Agreeably to their request, the king granted them full liberty to persecute the dissenters ; consequently their meeting-houses were shut up—business of informing revived—the spiritual courts became crowded—and the most peaceable of his majesty's subjects were exposed to all the merciless rapacity of the basest men the country could produce. As one of the most active agents in this nefarious work, the name of judge Jefferies is handed down to posterity with every mark of merited execration. The unjust imprisonments—the cruel scourgings—the ignominiously exposing learned divines in the pillory—with other barbarities too appalling to name, mark the short and inglorious reign of James II., and demonstrably prove the impossibility of a popish king governing a protestant nation.

The calculations of the wisest statesmen are not always correct. There are movements in the wheel of divine Providence with which many of the governors of this world are unacquainted, and which often produce effects the reverse of what they anticipated. It was expected that the operation of these severe laws would overthrow the dissenting interest,

and that, by dividing the clergy of the establishment, there would be little difficulty in translating popery into the hierarchy. To facilitate the contemplated change, numbers of Jesuits and priests were brought from abroad. Jesuits'-schools were opened—mass-houses were erected—Roman catholic bishops were consecrated—the popish clergy in their habits appeared regularly at court, and every art they could devise was employed to proselyte the common people. At length the conduct of the court excited public attention, when both clergy and laity united to check the rapid progress popery was making. The church party began to cherish a kinder feeling towards the dissenters. Many of the clergy began to expose the corruptions of popery from the pulpit, until they were prohibited by a mandate from the king, forbidding the clergy from preaching on any of the controverted points of religion. Even this prohibition did not prevent some of the most learned and zealous ministers in the established church from replying to the catholic publications which were continually emanating from the press; so that scarcely a week passed in which a sermon or pamphlet did not appear in defence of protestantism, and exposing the errors of popery.

The king and his catholic council found it necessary to adopt a different line of policy, as their former schemes had not answered their expectations. A new office was established in 1672, at which any dissenter might purchase a licence for fifty shillings,

which would exempt himself and family from all processes commenced against them, and protect them against all future interruption in their worship. To punish the clergy for opposing the views of the court, at the instigation of the popish party, a commission was appointed to inquire "what money had been raised, or what goods had been seized by distress on dissenters in all the counties in England for the last ten years, and not accounted for in the exchequer." The mere announcing of such a tribunal struck terror into the whole tribe of informers, spiritual courts, and confiding magistrates, many of whom were clergymen, who abused their power by giving countenance to unjust seizures and exorbitant fines. Many of them were aware that if the dissenters appeared against them their ruin was inevitable. The tables were now turned; and, had the dissenters been disposed, they might have made reprisals, but they had "not so learned Christ." On assurances being given that in future no such severities would be repeated, the dissenters generously refused to appear against their persecutors. They were well aware that the maxims of the king's religion, and the violence of his temper, were so repugnant to the principles of toleration that their purchased indulgence to worship God in peace would not be allowed them any longer than it would serve the interests of popery.

By the advice of judge Jefferies, the king appointed a new ecclesiastical commission, with all

the powers possessed by the court of high commission, which court was abolished by act of parliament in the last reign ; and in that act was a clause to prevent the erection of any court of that nature in future. But the king was so imperious in his councils that no law was acknowledged which opposed his will. The king, though a papist, assumed the supremacy, and directed a commission to the archbishop of Canterbury and others, “ to exercise all manner of jurisdiction and pre-eminence touching any spiritual or ecclesiastical jurisdictions, to visit, reform, redress, and amend all abuses, offences, contempts, and enormities, which by the spiritual or ecclesiastical laws might be corrected. Also to inquire into all misdemeanors and contempts which might be punished by the censures of the church, and to call before them all ecclesiastical persons, of what degree and dignity soever, and punish the offenders by excommunications, suspensions, deprivations, or other ecclesiastical censures,” &c. By the erection of this court, unlimited authority over the church of England was vested in the hands of seven commissioners, three of whom might act, provided Jefferies was one of the three. It required not the wisdom of Solomon to see through the king’s design in this proviso. The clergy, who by their obsequious addresses had encouraged the king in his arbitrary measures, were now called to reap the reward of their own doings ; and, had not divine Providence mercifully interposed before the plan was brought

into full operation, the weight of the rod would have been more severely felt.

The way being now open, his majesty commenced a formidable attack upon the prerogatives of the church. Dr. Sharp, rector of St. Giles's, having disobeyed the king's commands by exposing the errors of popery in one of his sermons, it was resolved to make an example of him, that it might deter others. An order was sent from the ecclesiastical commissioners to the bishop of London, commanding him to suspend the doctor. The bishop replied that he could not proceed in such a summary way,—that when the cause was heard he would pronounce such sentence as the canons of the church should warrant; and in the mean time he would desire the doctor to forbear preaching. The conduct of the bishop was highly resented by the court, who cited him to appear before the ecclesiastical commission, where he was treated with all that rudeness for which Jefferies was so notorious. When put upon his trial, he objected to the authority of the court, as being founded in direct opposition to the express words of the statute which repealed the act for the high commission. The other part of his defence was founded upon his having obeyed his majesty's order so far as he could by law, having placed Dr. Sharp as a man under suspension; and he could not inflict a censure on any of his clergy without a process, articles, and proof. This defence would have acquitted the bishop had he been tried by either common or

ecclesiastical law; but it had no weight when opposed by the imperious mandate of an arbitrary king. Dr. Sharp received a reprimand, and was allowed to return to his function, but the bishop was suspended during his majesty's pleasure.

The next step towards the establishment of popery was the introduction of Jesuits into the universities. The king sent a mandamus to the vice-chancellor of Cambridge to admit one Francis, an ignorant benedictine monk, to the degree of master of arts, without administering to him any oath. The vice-chancellor summoned a congregation, whose unanimous opinion was, that if they did not make a firm stand against an unconstitutional measure, the university might soon be filled with popish priests. For refusing to obey the king's commands, the vice-chancellor was summoned to appear before the ecclesiastical commission, and was deposed from his office.

The affair at Cambridge was followed by one of a more serious character at Oxford. A vacancy occurring in the presidency of Magdalen college, the king sent a mandamus to the vice-president, directing them to elect one Farmer for their president. The fellows of the college, in a very respectful manner, informed the king that the right of election was absolutely in themselves, and prayed his majesty to withdraw his mandate. As no reply arrived before the day of election, they chose Dr. Hough, a man possessing every qualification for the office. The election was confirmed by the

bishop of Winchester, their visitor, and the president was legally put in possession. The report of the election was no sooner known at court than an inferior commission was sent, and the president and fellows were cited to appear to answer for their conduct in disobeying the king's commands.

In the mean time the conduct of Farmer had become so notorious that they were ashamed of him, and a new mandamus was issued for them to elect Parker, a man of very indifferent character, lately promoted to the see of Oxford. The fellows refused to elect him, as their oath and the statutes of the college did not allow them to deprive a president of his office and elect another in his place. But they were told that the college statutes depended entirely upon the king's pleasure, and consequently their oaths were not obligatory when opposed to his will. This being a new species of logic, which had not been taught in the university before, the fellows objected to its adoption, and the case was referred to a further hearing. In the following year the king visited Oxford, when he summoned the president and fellows of the college to appear before him, and in the most uncourteous manner commanded them immediately to choose Parker for their president. The fellows again pleaded their oaths, and the statutes of the college; but the laws, oaths, and statutes, were as a spider's web when opposed to the king's will. A new commission was sent, with bishop Cartwright at its head, when the president was violently turned out

of his office, and Parker put in possession. All the fellows, except two who complied, were immediately displaced; and thus at once were the laws, liberty, and private property trampled upon by the king's prerogative. These violent proceedings alarmed the whole nation, as the interests of all the ecclesiastical establishments were so intimately connected with the universities. There is one circumstance which cannot escape observation. Of all the adulatory addresses sent to his majesty on his accession to the throne, that from the university of Oxford abounded most with fawning professions of "obedience to their sovereign without any limitation or restriction." That this university, which took the lead in professions of "obedience to their sovereign," should be the first to feel the effects of his arbitrary power was looked upon by many as retributive.

The king, finding his measures more firmly opposed by the church party than he expected, turned his attention to the dissenters, and, to prevent them from co-operating with the church, he published a royal declaration for liberty of conscience to all persons of every denomination. On the 6th of November, 1687, the king sent an order to the lord-mayor of London not to fine the Quakers for refusing to take the oaths or serve in certain offices. In virtue of this declaration, all dissenters were released from prison, and a way was opened for both protestant dissenters and Roman catholics to hold offices of trust and profit in the state without a legal

qualification. But, though the different bodies of dissenters sent addresses to his majesty acknowledging their grateful sense of his favour in allowing them liberty of conscience, yet, as a whole, they were too warmly attached to the constitution to receive with unmixed pleasure favours so unconstitutionally conferred. They had reason to believe that it was not from affection that the king had conferred such a favour on them, but that by that means he might more effectually promote the interests of popery. At a public meeting of the dissenters, where the subject was fully discussed in the presence of two messengers from the court, several of their leading men declared that rather than the constitution should be destroyed, and the liberties of the subject left to the caprice of the sovereign, they would willingly return to their prisons, and there patiently remain until divine Providence should effect their release by constitutional means. The king was greatly mortified at the sentiments they expressed, but he had placed his affairs in such a position that he could show no open resentment.

The noble and disinterested conduct of the dissenters at such a crisis convinced the episcopal party that it would be to their interest to cultivate a more friendly feeling towards their dissenting brethren, as the most effectual means of checking the usurpations of the court, and guarding their common privileges. Several pamphlets were published by the clergy, in which they acknowledged that their

conduct towards the dissenters had been highly improper, and that they had not been sufficiently on their guard against the artifices of the court;—and they promised that in future a different line of conduct should be pursued towards them, whenever their affairs should become more settled.

The king and his Jesuit priests, finding their scheme of fomenting a faction among the protestants unsuccessful, resolved to convince the nation at once that the conduct of the king was not amenable to the laws, by sending an ambassador to the pope, though the statute of Henry VIII. made it high treason to hold any commerce with the court of Rome. The earl of Castlemain was sent as ambassador to the pope with a most splendid retinue.

Innocent XI., who then filled the papal chair, did not at all approve of the measure, as he knew that it was contrary to the established laws of the realm, and his infallibility could not fail to suggest that the step had been taken with too much indiscretion to terminate successfully. In return for this expensive embassy, the pope sent a nuncio into England, who resided in London till the end of this short reign. Four Roman catholic bishops were consecrated in public at the king's chapel; and because the duke of Somerset would not officiate in his place at the ceremony he was dismissed from all his employments.

The affairs of the nation were now rapidly approaching to a crisis. The king employed agents to attempt the conversion of his daughter Mary;

the princess of Orange, to the Roman catholic religion; but they found her highness immovably fixed in her religious principles. An attempt was next made upon the prince, to induce him to concur with the king in repealing the penal laws against all dissenters. The prince replied, that “ if his majesty required their concurrence in repealing the penal laws, they were ready to give it, provided the laws by which Roman catholics were excluded from both houses of parliament, and from all employments ecclesiastical, civil, and military, remained in force.

The last grand effort of Jesuitical policy to establish popery in England was to provide an heir to the throne by the queen in a supernatural way. The Jesuits published that a vow had been made by the queen to the lady of Loretto, and the effect was a miraculous conception. The project being thus far complete, it was announced in the gazette of January, 1688,—“ that it had pleased Almighty God to give his majesty apparent hopes and good assurance of having issue by his royal consort the queen, who through God’s great goodness was now with child,”—and that public thanksgivings were to be offered in all churches on this occasion. The prospect of a popish successor gave a new tone to the court language. Without calling a parliament, the king published a declaration for liberty of conscience far more advantageous to the papists than any former. An order was sent commanding the clergy to read it in all the churches, immediately

after divine service, on the penalty of being prosecuted in the ecclesiastical commission. This mandate struck the protestants with general consternation. After mature deliberation among the bishops and clergy, eighteen of the former, and the great body of the latter, agreed not to read the declaration. The archbishop of Canterbury and six of his brethren drew up a petition to the king, assigning their reasons for disobeying his order, and stating, that it was from no want of respect to his majesty's authority, nor an unwillingness that favour should be shown to the dissenters, but that the declaration, "being founded on such a dispensing power as may at present set aside all laws ecclesiastical and civil, appears to us illegal, and did so to the parliament in 1672, and it is a point of such great consequence that we cannot make ourselves a party to it, so far as the reading of it in the church in the time of divine service will amount to, and distributing it all over the kingdom."—This was signed by Sancroft, archbishop of Canterbury, bishops Lloyd, of St. Asaph,—Kenn, of Bath and Wells,—Turner, of Ely,—Lake, of Chichester,—White, of Peterborough, and Trelawney, of Bristol. The king was greatly agitated when the address was sent to him, and in a very angry tone replied, "I have heard of this before, but did not believe it; I did not expect this from the church of England, especially from some of you. If I change my mind you shall hear from me; if not, I expect my commands shall be obeyed." Intimating that they should

be made to feel what it was to disobey him. To which the bishops replied, “The will of the Lord be done.”

The king found his affairs assume a more critical character every day. His arbitrary principles of government,—his religious bigotry,—the influence his queen and the Jesuits had acquired over him, presented an insuperable barrier in the way of his retreat. He therefore adopted the advice most congenial to his own violent temper, and ordered the bishops to be prosecuted “for contriving, making, and publishing a seditious libel against his majesty and his government.” A warrant was immediately signed for their commitment to the Tower; but such was the excited state of public feeling that they durst not take them through the streets, but conveyed them privately by water. After being confined a few days, they were liberated on giving bonds to answer to the information.

While the bishops were in the Tower, and the princess Anne at the Bath, the queen was declared to be delivered of a prince. But, notwithstanding the great artifice employed about this mysterious birth, it was attended with so many incongruous circumstances as at once to prove that the whole was fictitious. To detail the circumstances of this nefarious case would not comport with the plan of this work, but a few of the facts it will be necessary to notice. No means had been used to satisfy the protestant part of the nation that the

off the legitimate heir to the crown to involve the nation in all the evils connected with the establishment of popery, and the imposing a popish prince under barefaced impostures, he became more disposed to listen to the voice of the people ; and, as a further inducement, the prince was aware that if popery should be again established in England, Holland and the rest of the reformed states would be exposed to the most imminent danger. Rumour soon reported that an invasion was contemplated by the prince, but no credit was attached to it by the king, until he received a letter from the marquis of Abbeville at the Hague, informing him of the preparations. Whilst perusing the letter the king turned pale, dropped it out of his hand, and remained for some time speechless. He now saw himself on the brink of ruin, and, like one in a state of distraction, he looked every way for relief, but could determine on nothing. All the efforts of the court were at once paralyzed. The first thing determined upon was to send for all the bishops that were in town, and request them at once to say what would satisfy the church of England ; concluding that if they could satisfy the bishops, and thereby recover the confidence of the church, all might yet be well. The bishops gave it as their unanimous opinion that he should immediately annul the ecclesiastical commission—recal all licences authorising papists to teach schools—prohibit the apostolical vicars from invading the ecclesiastical jurisdiction—fill the vacant

when the multitudes who were assembled at Westminster-hall, on hearing that the jury had acquitted the bishops, set up a tremendous shout, which was echoed from place to place, till it reached the camp, when the army set up a universal shout as if they had obtained a great victory.

The conduct of the king, when his affairs were in such a deranged state, can only be accounted for on the ground of infatuation. Though the seven bishops had been acquitted by a jury, the king urged prosecutions in the new ecclesiastical court against the inferior clergy who refused to read the declaration. The court commanded all chancellors, commissioners, and archdeacons to make inquiry, and transmit a return of all the churches and chapels in which his majesty's declaration had been read. The commissioners, finding that no notice had been taken of their order, issued another, requiring the returns to be made by the 15th of November, but before that day arrived their authority was at an end.

Several of the most influential men in the kingdom, both clergy and laity, had for some time been in correspondence with the prince of Orange, entreating him, as presumptive heir to the crown, to interpose on behalf of the kingdom, as it was evident that the measures pursued by government must rapidly hasten the overthrow of the constitution. Hitherto the prince had manifested no disposition to enter into such negotiations; but now, seeing the means that were employed to cut

off the legitimate heir to the crown to involve the nation in all the evils connected with the establishment of popery, and the imposing a popish prince under barefaced impostures, he became more disposed to listen to the voice of the people ; and, as a further inducement, the prince was aware that if popery should be again established in England, Holland and the rest of the reformed states would be exposed to the most imminent danger. Rumour soon reported that an invasion was contemplated by the prince, but no credit was attached to it by the king, until he received a letter from the marquis of Abbeville at the Hague, informing him of the preparations. Whilst perusing the letter the king turned pale, dropped it out of his hand, and remained for some time speechless. He now saw himself on the brink of ruin, and, like one in a state of distraction, he looked every way for relief, but could determine on nothing. All the efforts of the court were at once paralyzed. The first thing determined upon was to send for all the bishops that were in town, and request them at once to say what would satisfy the church of England ; concluding that if they could satisfy the bishops, and thereby recover the confidence of the church, all might yet be well. The bishops gave it as their unanimous opinion that he should immediately annul the ecclesiastical commission—recal all licences authorising papists to teach schools—prohibit the apostolical vicars from invading the ecclesiastical jurisdiction—fill the vacant

bishoprics—restore the charters—call a free parliament, and secure the interests of the church as settled by the act of uniformity. Nothing could have been more ungrateful to the imperious mind of James than this advice, which, had it been given the week before, would have secured the proposer a safe lodging in the Tower. But this was not the time for him to insist upon his prerogative. The king began to act upon the advice, though very reluctantly. The suspension was taken off the bishop of London,—the ecclesiastical commission was dissolved,—the city charter, and the fellows of Magdalen College were restored. But it was now too late; the prince of Orange was on his way, and in a few days effected a landing in England.

The prince published a declaration as soon as he landed, which was speedily circulated throughout the kingdom, stating that he had been informed, upon unquestionable authority, of numerous violations of law by a dispensing power,—of the iniquitous proceedings of the court of ecclesiastical commission,—of corporation charters being annulled,—the rights of private property invaded,—judges displaced for refusing to pronounce sentence according to the orders sent from court,—protestants turned out, and Roman catholics put into offices of the highest trust and profit, a Jesuit being one of the privy council,—the encouragement given to Roman catholics by building them churches and colleges,—and the strong presumptive

proofs of the illegitimacy of the prince of Wales. These facts having been transmitted to him "by some of the highest orders in society, spirituals and temporals," he had resolved upon coming over into England, in order to apply the most effectual remedies. He proposed calling a free parliament, "that should provide for the establishment of the protestant religion, with the utmost liberty of conscience to dissenters consistent with the principles of the constitution."

The publication of this declaration gave great satisfaction, and induced numbers to flock to the prince's standard, among whom were prince George of Denmark, the dukes of Ormond and Grafton, Lord Wharton, and a number of protestant officers and soldiers, which convinced the king that the army was not to be relied upon. The king was painfully affected when his youngest daughter, princess Anne, privately withdrew from court with the bishop of London, who put on his buff coat and sword, and commanded a small army for her highness's defence. The king's affairs became more desperate every day, and he was as much depressed in his adversity as he had been imperious in his prosperity. The queen and the young prince of Wales were sent into France, and the king himself followed privately from Rochester, the 11th of December, 1688. Thus terminated the short, unhappy, inglorious, and tyrannical reign of James II. As a king, nothing good can be said of him. If he ever possessed those good qualifica-

tions for governing which some historians have attributed to him, his conduct only serves to exhibit in a clearer light how dangerous it is for a prince under the influence of popish counsels and superstitions to wear the crown of a protestant kingdom.

CHAPTER V.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF WILLIAM III., IN 1688, TO
HIS DEATH IN 1702.

THE prince of Orange convened a parliament by the name of a convention, which met the 24th day of January, 1689. A letter from the prince was read in each house, in which he assures them that he had, in compliance with their request, done every thing in his power towards laying a firm foundation for securing the public safety, the religion, laws, and liberties of the subject. His statement of his views and motives in his letters to the convention, and his answer to a deputation from the dissenters, were calculated to leave a favourable impression on the public mind. In his answer to the dissenters he says, " My great end was the preservation of the protestant religion, and, with the Almighty's assistance and permission, so to defend and support the same as may give it strength and reputation throughout the world, sufficient to preserve it from the insults and oppression of its most implacable enemies ; and that more immediately in these kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland ; and I will use my utmost endeavours so to settle and cement all different persuasions of protestants, in such a bond of love and community, as may contribute to the lasting

security and enjoyment of spirituals and temporals to all sincere professors of that holy religion."

In the convention parliament, several methods were proposed for settling the government. Some were for compromising matters with king James, and some were for a regency; but, after long and warm debates, the throne was declared vacant, king James having abdicated the government, and broken the original contract with his people. When the question was put whether to fill the throne with a king, or to appoint a regent, it was carried in favour of the former by two votes; fifty-one voted for a king, and forty-nine for a regent. The question being carried in favour of a king, the crown was offered by both houses of parliament to the prince and princess of Orange, who were proclaimed king and queen of England, &c., on the 13th of February, 1689, and crowned at Westminster the 11th day of June following, amidst the joyful acclamations of all the friends of the religion and liberties of their country.

No doubt can be entertained of the sincerity of the prince when he published his declaration, pledging himself to adopt such measures as should afford protection to the established church, and liberty of conscience to all peaceable protestant subjects who dissented from it; for, in his speech to the house on the 16th of March, 1689, he proposed a measure for their consideration, which was to allow all protestant subjects to qualify for serving the government. His majesty reminded them

that it was necessary that the oaths to be taken should be settled by law. "I recommend it," said he, "to your care to make a speedy provision for it; and, as I doubt not but you will sufficiently provide against papists, so I hope you will leave room for admission of all protestants that are willing and able to serve. This conjunction in my service will tend to the better uniting you among yourselves, and the strengthening you against your common enemies."

The bill for altering the oaths of allegiance and supremacy was introduced into the house of lords, and a distant day fixed to allow the clergy time to satisfy themselves of the lawfulness of acknowledging the government; as it was not thought proper that some of them should hold the highest offices in the church who refused to take the oaths of allegiance. Whilst the bill was before the house, it was proposed to insert a clause to remove the necessity of receiving the sacrament to render a man capable of holding any office, employment, or place of trust; but it was rejected by a great majority. Another clause was afterwards proposed, that such should be sufficiently qualified for any office, provided they received the sacrament within a year before or after their admission into office, either according to the usage of the church of England, or in any protestant congregation, attested by proper witnesses; but this clause was negatived. In a committee of the house of lords, it was proposed to dispense with kneeling at the sacrament,

but the votes being equal, according to the usages of the house, it was negatived. The motion for dispensing with the cross in baptism met with a similar fate. Thus the wise and noble designs of the king to admit all protestants to hold places of trust and profit were frustrated by the turbulent spirit of a factious party.

The bill, without the above clauses, was sent to the commons, entitled "An act for exempting his majesty's protestant subjects dissenting from the church of England from the penalties of certain laws therein mentioned;" but, instead of proceeding with the bill, an address was sent to the king, desiring him to call a convocation of the clergy, to sit, as formerly, during the session of parliament. The king was very much displeased with this address, being aware that it emanated from a party who, whilst professing great zeal for the church, were actually setting themselves against all the liberal and healing measures he had contemplated. The motion made in the house of lords for a comprehension being rejected, bishops Burnet and Tillotson advised the king to refer the subject to a synod of divines, whose determinations might tend to silence the papists, who ridiculed the Reformation, as having nothing for its basis but parliamentary authority; and that the decisions of a synod would be better received by the body of the clergy. Accordingly it was agreed by his majesty in council that a select number of divines should be appointed by the royal mandate, to consult

about the most proper methods of healing the wounds of the church,—that their determinations should be laid before the convocation, and from thence receive the sanction of parliament. Agreeably to this resolution, the king issued out a commission to thirty divines, ten of whom were bishops. They were directed “to prepare such alterations of the liturgy and canons, and such proposals for the reformation of the ecclesiastical courts and other matters as in their judgment would most conduce to the good order, edification, and unity of the church of England.”

When the committee were assembled, an objection was stated against the legality of their commission. Sprat, bishop of Rochester, who was on the ecclesiastical commission in the last reign, and continued to sit, in direct opposition to an act of parliament, now pleaded his apprehension of incurring a premunire, and with three others withdrew from the commission, having intimated their fear of too much being done for the dissenters. The rest of the commissioners entered upon their important work with a fixed determination of correcting every objectionable part of the liturgy. They cancelled all the apocryphal lessons, and supplied their places with portions of the canonical scriptures. The Athanasian creed was left to the discretion of the minister either to read it or change it for the Apostles' creed. New collects were drawn up for the whole course of the year, more in the epistles and gospels for the day, “with

an elegance of expression," says Dr. Nichols, "calculated to kindle a flame of devotional feeling in the hearts of the hearers. A new version of the psalms was made, more agreeable to the original. The chanting in cathedrals was to be laid aside, and the legendary saints' days omitted,—the cross in baptism to be left to the option of the parents,—sponsors to be omitted in baptism if required, and the children to be presented by the parents. Kneeling at the sacrament to be optional;—fasts in Lent were not to consist in a distinction of meats, but in extraordinary acts of devotion. The word minister was to be substituted for priest, and the use of the surplice left to the discretion of the bishop. A rubric was made declaring the damnatory clause in the Athanasian creed not to be applied to every particular article, but intended against those who deny the substance of the Christian religion.

Had these emendations been adopted, with others that were proposed, in all probability the greater part of the dissenters would have returned within the pale of the established church. But while the committee were calmly deliberating on the best means of promoting the peace and welfare of the nation, the disaffected party made such a representation of their proceedings as greatly inflamed the minds of the people against the government. The king himself did not escape the envenomed shafts of their malevolence, but it was currently reported that his majesty was not well

affected towards episcopacy,—that the church was to be pulled down, and presbytery erected on its ruins. The universities took the alarm, and indulged in the severest invectives against both the measure and the men who were engaged in it, as if they were about to distract, divide, and undermine the church, though, under divine Providence, the protestants were indebted to them for having at that day an established church in England. The clergy exerted themselves to the utmost to send men to the convocation who were opposed to the measure, because the alterations proposed by the committee were to be referred to them.

When the convocation met, his majesty sent them a message, assuring them of his favour and protection, entreating them to consider the subjects he should order to be laid before them, with a zeal, care, and impartiality worthy of those who wish to promote the peace and prosperity of the church. But very few of the clergy that composed the convocation were of a temper of mind sufficiently calm to enter dispassionately upon so important a subject. It was evident that their determinations were fixed before the business commenced; for the first thing resolved upon by the lower house was, not to debate on any subject relating to any alterations in the liturgy or services of the church. The bishops sent down to the lower house, wishing them to join in an address to the king, acknowledging the protection he had afforded the protestant religion in general, and to

the church of England in particular. But such was the spirit of these men, that they would not even agree to that, because it would identify them with the foreign churches. They would thank his majesty for his care to establish the church of England, whereby the interest of the protestant churches abroad would be better secured, but would not insert the words, "this and all other protestant churches," as the bishops desired. The king, perceiving that there was no disposition in them to do good, interfered to prevent their doing mischief; he therefore broke up the session, and kept them under prorogation for the space of ten years.

This was the last attempt to re-unite the dissenters with the established church. The attempt was praiseworthy on the part of the king, and of those who with him were anxious to promote the peace and prosperity of the nation. The presbyterians had certainly merited better treatment for the essential and disinterested services they had rendered the establishment. It was chiefly through their means that the king and constitution were restored in 1660, without making any provision for themselves; and also at the Revolution, when the establishment of popery was prevented by a presbyterian prince, and an army from Holland of the same religious principles as the dissenters in England. The factious spirit that prevailed among the bigoted episcopalians, many of whom were strongly attached to the interest of king James, and more friendly to popery than to presbyterianism, defeated

every wise and benevolent design to promote an improvement in the public worship, the interests of the protestant religion, and the honour and prosperity of the church of England.

The king, finding that all his efforts to induce the deprived bishops to take the oaths of allegiance were ineffectual, proceeded to fill the sees which had been kept vacant on their account for more than twelve months. Dr. Tillotson was promoted to the primacy, very much against his own will, but his appointment to that important station displayed the wisdom and discrimination of the king. His deep piety, great prudence, and fidelity to the king and constitution, rendered him pre-eminently qualified for the archiepiscopal chair; but the zeal of the archbishop against infidelity and popery, with his generous conduct towards the dissenters, rendered him very unpopular with the high church party. Dr. Sharp was promoted to the see of York, and all the other sees were filled with some of the best and most learned men in the church. The labours of these excellent men were soon rendered visible, by the improvement in the morals of their respective dioceses. They occupied the pulpits, and performed the other important functions of their offices, with the greatest regularity. They paid particular attention to the characters and qualifications of those whom they admitted into the ministry. But their unpardonable crime was their attachment to the government, and their lenitive measures towards the dissenters, which

procured them the epithet of betrayers of the church.

It is very probable that the conduct of a party who were violently opposed to the government, and to all who had the welfare of the nation at heart, had a fatal effect on the health and spirits of the good and loyal archbishop. After enduring the lash of their malignant tongues for little more than two years, it pleased God to remove him to a better world, in the year 1694. A greater man than Tillotson had not occupied the archiepiscopal chair at Canterbury since the death of Cranmer. Such was the extensive benevolence of archbishop Tillotson that his large revenues were all disposed of in his annual charities; and the only legacy he had to leave his family at his death was his manuscript sermons, the copyright of which was sold for two thousand five hundred pounds; but, before the above sum could be obtained, his widow would have been in want had not king William granted her a small annual pension.

The spirit of persecution which had so long been kept alive by the party in power, against all who did not conform to their views, was followed by a general and visible declension of genuine piety. The doctrine of the Trinity began to be disputed, not merely by lay-philosophers, but by many of the clergy, who wrote and preached in favour of those doctrines which undermine the foundation of the Gospel system. The controversy which followed reflects no credit on its fomenters.

Numbers were thereby led to renounce the sublime mysteries of religion, because they could not define, or fully comprehend, the operations of the Eternal mind. Infidelity soon followed, as a natural consequence, the effects of which we shall soon have to notice more at large. One of the execrable fruits of these disputationes was that the vitals of Christianity became the subject of ridicule; not only among the low and illiterate, but even some of the learned who had once subscribed to those doctrines which they now impugned. Alarmed at the advantages given to infidelity by these disputationes, his majesty issued a mandate to the bishops, directing them “to repress error and heresy with all possible zeal, and to watch against and hinder the use of new terms or new explanations in the mysteries of religion.” But the unhallowed seeds of infidelity had taken too deep root for their growth to be prevented by a royal mandate.

To counteract the spread of infidel principles, a number of highly respectable individuals, who had the welfare of religion at heart, formed the laudable design of distributing books among the lower orders of society on the most important doctrines of Christianity. To carry their designs into execution, a meeting was held on the 8th day of March, 1699, the object of which is stated in the following preamble to their first proceedings:—“Whereas the growth of vice and immorality is greatly owing to gross ignorance of the principles of the Christian religion: we, whose names are under written,

agree to meet together, as often as we can conveniently, to consult (under the conduct of divine Providence and assistance) how we may be able, by due and lawful methods, to promote Christian knowledge ; " the name by which the society has been known ever since. The persons who composed the first meeting were, the Right Hon. Lord Guildford, Sir Humphry Mackworth, Mr. Justice Hook, Dr. Bray, and Colonel Colchester ; to these were shortly after added, bishops Stillingfleet, Kidder, Stratford, Williams, Fowler, Evans, and Smith ; the Rev. Drs. Willis, Hayley, Stanhope, Hare, Kennet, Woodward, Nicholls, Mapleton, and Crabe, Sir George Wheeler, Sir Richard Blackmore, &c., &c.

As they acquired the means, they established " catechetical schools and lending catechetical libraries in the several market towns throughout the kingdom, by distributing good books, or otherwise as the society shall direct." To circulate the holy Scriptures, the liturgy, and other judicious books, on all the leading points of faith and practice, has, from its formation, been a primary object in the operations of this society. It is pleasing at this period to find that the energies of this society have become more vigorous with age. We have not the means of ascertaining the precise number of books circulated during the one hundred and thirty years of its active operations, but the number must have been immense. The Report of the society states, that between April, 1829, and

April, 1830, they issued 60,548 Bibles, 59,518 New Testaments, 145,912 Common Prayer-Books, 15,552 Psalters, 114,236 other bound books, 1,139,794 tracts, half-bound, and 180,000 papers for gratuitous distribution.

The society for promoting Christian knowledge gave rise to the "Society for the propagation of the Gospel in foreign parts," for which a charter was obtained of king William III., in the year 1701. This incorporated society directed its operations to the British plantations in North America, the East Indies, and other parts of the world. In the year 1712, they furnished their missionaries at Tranquebar with a printing-press, and all the necessary materials, by which they were enabled to publish the whole, or parts, of the holy Scriptures, the Book of Common-Prayer, Psalters, and many other religious books and tracts, in the Tamul, Bengalee, and Portuguese languages, which have had an extensive circulation through various parts of British India.

A trial which came on about this time excited considerable interest. Dr. Watson, bishop of St. David's, was accused of simony. According to the laws and usages of the church of England, he was tried by the archbishop, who is the only judge of a bishop in ecclesiastical offences. The archbishop called in six other bishops to assist him in the trial. Many scandalous things were so fully proved against Watson on the trial, that the court could entertain no doubt of his guilt; but, when

they were about to pronounce judgment, the bishop, who had hitherto waved the privilege of his peerage, and had submitted to the authority of his judge, claimed his privilege. As he had permitted the trial to proceed so far without putting in his plea, no attention was paid to it by the court, and the archbishop pronounced the sentence of deprivation. The bishop appealed against the sentence to a court of delegates, who confirmed the proceedings of the archbishop. But though Watson's guilt had received a double confirmation, yet his cause was warmly espoused by a number of the disaffected lords, merely because he had been promoted by king James. They pretended that, according to the rules and usages of primitive times, a bishop could only be tried by a synod of the bishops of the province. But this objection was answered by proving that since the ninth century both popes and kings have concurred in placing this power in the hands of the metropolitans;—that it was the constant practice in England before the Reformation; and by the new code of ecclesiastical laws, passed in the twenty-fifth year of Henry VIII., 1534, the same power was vested in the metropolitan. Nor has the archbishop power to erect a new court, or to try a bishop in any other way than as directed by the laws and usages of the church. Those who had objected to the authority of the archbishop, finding their ground untenable, let the affair drop by expressing a hope that the see would not be filled until the powers

of the archbishop were more satisfactorily defined.

From this period not only was the ecclesiastical establishment of England under William and Mary restored to its former privileges, but no change has since taken place in its constitution. During a period of one hundred and thirty years, not one act of parliament has been passed, or a canon made, to affect the principles on which that venerable fabric is founded. What remains to be recorded, for the completion of this history, relates chiefly to a few of the scions which have subsequently sprung from her roots. Though the exterior of the established church was now considered complete, much was still wanting to bring the interior to a state of perfection. The clergy were in a very divided state, and many of them evinced a temper and spirit of mind which bore no mark of resemblance to the meek and lowly mind of Jesus. The more moderate among them were disposed to show a little lenity towards their dissenting brethren ; but that was looked upon as a more unpardonable crime by the high church party than if they had leaned so much towards popery. Dr. Atterbury was at the head of the disaffected party, all of whom were warmly attached to king James's interest, and threw every impediment they could devise in the way of government.

To oppose the proceedings of government, the clergy prevailed with some of the new ministers to support their claim for a convocation to sit during

the whole session of parliament. It was stated by the clergy that their not sitting had deprived them of their privileges, as they ought to form a part of the parliament; and a book was published by Dr. Atterbury in support of their claims. The doctor, who had long been popular with his party, was now looked up to as the most faithful friend of the clergy, whilst the bishops were represented as the enemies and betrayers of the church. The demands of the inferior clergy had well nigh produced an open rupture with the bishops, which the disaffected did all they could to promote. Convocations had always been adjourned by the archbishop at his pleasure, but the clergy now disputed his authority to adjourn them, and resolved to continue their sittings till both houses of parliament were prorogued. Formerly, the clergy taxed themselves in their convocations, which was the principal end for which they met; but ever since the reformation they had been taxed by the house of commons, and had only been assembled *pro forma*, and not to sit as a synod. But they now demanded this as a right, and represented their being prorogued by the archbishop as a violation of their constitutional privileges. The violence with which this contest was carried on produced so much faction and discord between the clergy and the bishops that the effects were felt in every part of the kingdom.

The affairs of the church were in this unsettled state at the demise of William III., which event

took place on Sunday the 8th of March, 1702. King William was a man peculiarly fitted by divine Providence for the important station he was called to fill. It was a very critical part he had to act; and that habitual sedateness and deliberate manner in which he expressed himself were valuable qualifications, considering that he frequently had about him those who were disposed to put the worst construction upon his words. As a man he was not without his failings; but these were more than counterbalanced by his good qualities. The world has long acknowledged with what justice, honour, and industry, he laboured to promote the best interests of the two nations he had undertaken to protect. If William's talents were not of the most splendid and popular kind, his character as a prince, a general, and a statesman, presents no flaw in which even malice itself can fix its venomous tooth.

CHAPTER IX.

FROM THE ACCESSION OF QUEEN ANNE, IN 1702,
TO HER DEATH, IN 1714.

ON the death of king William, queen Anne ascended the throne, and her name has been immortalized by the first act in her reign relating to the church. On the 6th of February, 1704, that being her majesty's birth-day, she expressed her intention, in a message to the house of commons, of appropriating that branch of the revenue, raised out of the first-fruits and tenths paid by the clergy, to the increase of all the small benefices in the nation. The first-fruits and tenths were a tax imposed upon the clergy by the popes in support of the holy war, and afterwards became a standing branch of papal revenue, until it was abolished by Henry VIII., who in a subsequent parliament settled it as a part of the regular income of the crown. The tenths amounted to about eleven thousand pounds per annum; and the first-fruits would average about five thousand. These monies were not brought into the treasury as the other branches of the revenue were, but were assignations to favourites, or their friends, for a longer or shorter period. Upon the queen's message, a bill was brought into the house of commons, enabling her majesty to alienate this branch of the revenue, and to create a corpora-

tion by charter to apply the monies for the above purposes. From this fund, which has since been generally known by the name of queen Anne's bounty, thousands of poor clergymen have received partial relief; but the unequal distribution of the church revenues is still justly complained of by those on whom devolve the principal part of the labour.

This benevolent act of the queen towards the lower orders of the clergy did not at all soften that harsh and unchristian temper in which many of them indulged. Subsequent events proved that a spirit of revolt was working underneath, and a favourable pretext for bringing it into active operation was looked for with anxiety. When the parliament was sitting in the winter of 1707 and 1708, the convocation was sitting also; and the lower house having intimated their intention of opposing the union with Scotland, which was then under consideration, by an application to the house of commons, her majesty wrote to the archbishop to prorogue the convocation for three weeks, during which time the bill passed. This act of the prerogative was resented by the lower house, in a representation to the bishops, declaring that there was no precedent for such a prorogation since the clergy submitted to Henry VIII., in 1534. The bishops at once saw that this was an intended attack on the queen's supremacy, and ordered it to be laid before her majesty. They also directed the records to be examined, from which it appeared that within the

above-named period seven or eight prorogations had been ordered during the sittings of parliament. The queen wrote a severe letter to the archbishop, complaining of the illegal practices of the inferior clergy, in representing her late order as without a precedent, and contrary to ancient usages, which was untrue in fact, and an invasion of her supremacy. Her majesty also intimated that, great as was her tenderness towards the clergy, if such conduct were repeated, she would use those means which the law warranted for punishing offenders.

The day on which the queen's letter was to be communicated to the lower house, the prolocutor, the dean of Canterbury, had left town without acquainting the archbishop, and consequently very few of the clergy were present. For this open contempt of authority, the archbishop pronounced the prolocutor contumacious, and appointed the day of their next meeting for him to receive censure. The prolocutor was urged by the opposition party not to make any submission; but he yielded to sounder advice, and acknowledged his fault to the perfect satisfaction of the archbishop. But the submission which fear extracted from the prolocutor was far from producing any improvement in the spirit of the party. They roundly asserted that the queen had been misinformed, and that their statement was true,—though the lord chancellor, and the lord chief justice Holt, after examining the records, affirmed to the queen that their statement was false, there being many precedents of such prorogations.

Many of the clergy, instead of attending to the duties of their office, occupied a large portion of their time in debating party politics ; and, by their frequent and uncharitable animadversions on the act of toleration, inflamed the minds of the people against all who were friendly towards the dissenters. In the prosecution of this object, none manifested a greater zeal than Dr. Sacheverel. He preached before the judges at the assizes in Derby, and, on the 5th of November following, preached the same sermon at St. Paul's, from 2 Cor. xi. 26, " Perils from false brethren ;" in which he poured forth a torrent of scurrility upon the dissenters and the act of toleration. He asserted that the church was violently attacked by her enemies, and but feebly defended by her pretended friends. Under such circumstances, he considered it his duty to sound the trumpet, and call the people to arm themselves in defence of the church with the "whole armour of God." The sermon was highly disapproved of by all the peaceable part of the community, but the party it was intended to serve took such pains to give it publicity that forty thousand copies were put in circulation in a very short time. The queen was highly offended at it, and the ministry considered it such an open attack upon them that they resolved to proceed against the author. The subject was taken up with spirit in the house of commons, and the motion for impeaching Sacheverel was carried by a large majority. But the sentence passed upon him was the most

lenient that they could devise. He was suspended from preaching for three years, and his sermon, and the justification of it, which contained a number of blasphemous expressions, were to be burnt in the presence of the mayor and sheriffs of London. The annunciation of this sentence was received by his partisans with the loudest acclamations. Bonfires, illuminations, and revels, were kept up both in town and country, as if they had obtained a complete victory. In a short time after, Sacheverel was presented with a benefice in North Wales; and, as he went to take possession of it, through almost every town he passed he was entertained with a princely munificence. On many occasions, his infatuated followers were excited almost to fury by his inflammatory speeches, without any provocation being given on the part of his opponents. They lauded him as the champion of the church, and he received their adulations with a pomp equalled only by the folly of his party.

The spirit of insubordination and strife, so long cherished by the lower orders of the clergy, was followed by the introduction of doctrines the most heterodox. Whiston, professor of mathematics at Cambridge, introduced a compound heresy of Arianism and Appolinarianism. He not only rejected the doctrine of our Lord's divinity, but denied that he possessed a perfect rational human soul, and supposed that the *νοος*, or *mind*, was all the soul that acted in the body of our Saviour. He

stated that his sentiments were supported by the apostolical constitutions, which he considered as forming an important part of the canon of the Scriptures. His doctrines were condemned at Cambridge, and, as he persevered in maintaining them, he was finally expelled from the university. He then wrote a vindication of himself and his doctrine, which he dedicated to the convocation. A great diversity of opinion prevailed on the authority of the convocation to proceed against a man for heresy. However, to avoid being involved in a premunire, they proceeded to examine his book, to ascertain whether his doctrine was contrary to the Scriptures and the first four general councils, which is the test established by law for the trial of heresy. They extracted a number of propositions from his book containing Arianism, upon which they founded their censure. Their decision was sent to the queen for her instructions how to proceed; but, as she returned them no answer, the affair was dropped.

About the same time the religious public was greatly agitated by the strange sentiments published by Mr. Henry Dodwell. Among other peculiar opinions which he propagated were,—that none could be saved but those who had a federal right to be saved,—that the seals of the covenant to that right were the sacraments,—that all who died without receiving the sacraments were left to the uncovenanted mercy of God,—that none had a right to administer the sacraments but those who were duly authorized,—that the right of ordination

was limited to the apostles, and such bishops and priests as had been ordained in a regular succession from them. He believed that the souls of men were naturally mortal, but were immortalized by a divine baptismal spirit, conveyed only by persons who are episcopally ordained. These undigested and unconnected notions were cordially embraced by a number of the disaffected clergy, as evidently intending to unchristianize all the dissenters. Several books were published to show the necessity of the dissenters being rebaptized, to prevent their damnation. This subject was taken up by the convocation; but such was the diversity of opinion among both the bishops and inferior clergy that, after much debating on the subject, Dodwell's opinions were left to die a natural death.

Whilst some of the clergy were indulging in the most dangerous speculations on abstruse subjects, others were taking rapid strides towards popery. One clergyman, of the name of Hicks, published a book in which he roundly asserted that there was a proper sacrifice in the eucharist. He also condemned the supremacy of the crown in ecclesiastical affairs, as settled at the Reformation. Another clergyman, of the name of Pratt, printed a sermon which he had preached in several pulpits in London, in which he asserts that the regularly ordained priest possesses the same power to forgive sin that our Saviour did when upon earth, and that no repentance is available without priestly absolution. A motion was made in the lower house of convoca-

tion to censure the sermon, but the subject was dropped for want of support.

A considerable number of the clergy were at this time under the influence of a factious and irreligious spirit, and covertly countenanced the claims of the Pretender. The conduct also of the queen, in dismissing some of her most faithful ministers without any ostensible cause, excited considerable alarm among all the true friends of the protestant succession. In this agitated state were the affairs of the nation at the death of queen Anne, which event took place on the 1st of August, 1714, after a reign of little more than twelve years. It may with propriety be said of queen Anne that she was more amiable than great, and would have shone with brighter lustre in private life than on a throne. She was very accessible, and would listen to every thing; but to matters of importance her replies were in general the mere *dictum* of her then favourite, for her attachments were not the most permanent. It has fallen to the lot of few princes to be favoured with such able and faithful servants as queen Anne was, whilst she retained in her service the earl of Oxford in the cabinet, and the duke of Marlborough in the field; but she dismissed both these, through the intrigues of an ambitious flatterer. In her terminated the line of the Stuarts,—a family whose misfortunes and misconduct are not to be paralleled in history,—a family that never either rewarded their friends or defended them from their enemies.

CHAPTER X.

**FROM THE ACCESSION OF GEORGE I., IN 1714, TO
HIS DEATH, IN 1727.**

ON the demise of queen Anne, George Lewis, prince electoral of Brunswick Lunenburg, was proclaimed king of Great Britain. A spirit of disaffection prevailed, chiefly among the lower orders of society, against the settlement of the crown in this illustrious family. The conduct of the clergy had the tendency to promote such a spirit. Many of them were heterodox in their doctrine, and immoral in their lives, and manifested their disaffection to government by refusing to pray for his majesty in the prescribed form, commencing the prayer by saying, " You shall pray for," &c. Well knowing what would be the consequence if such conduct was connived at, his majesty, with the advice of the privy council, issued the following directions, addressed to the archbishops and bishops, dated December 11th, 1714.

" GEORGE REX.

Most reverend and right reverend fathers in God, we greet you well: whereas we are given to understand, that there have been of late great differences among some of the clergy of this realm about their ways of expressing themselves in their sermons and writings concerning the doctrine of the

blessed Trinity; and whereas, also, unusual liberties have been taken by several of the said clergy, in intermeddling with the affairs of state and government, and the constitution of the realm, both which may be of very dangerous consequence, if not timely prevented; we, therefore, out of our princely care and zeal for the preservation of the peace and unity of the church, together with the purity of the Christian faith, and also for preserving the peace and quiet of the state, have thought fit to send you the following directions, which we straitly charge and command you to publish, and to see that they be observed within your several dioceses:—

“1. That no preacher whatsoever, in his sermon or lecture, do presume to deliver any other doctrine concerning the blessed Trinity than what is contained in the holy Scriptures, and is agreeable to the creeds and the thirty-nine articles of religion.

“2. That in the explication of this doctrine, they carefully avoid all new terms, and confine themselves to such ways of expression as have been commonly used in the church.

“3. That care be taken in this matter especially to observe the fifty-third canon of this church, which forbids public opposition between preachers; because (as that canon expresses it) there groweth thereby much offence and disquietness unto the people; and that, above all things, they abstain from bitter invectives and scurrilous language against all persons whatsoever.

“ 4. That none of the clergy, in their sermons or lectures, presume to intermeddle in any affairs of state or government, or the constitution of the realm, save only on such special feasts and fasts as are or shall be appointed by public authority, and then no further than the occasion of such days strictly require; provided always that nothing in this direction shall be understood to discharge any person from preaching in defence of our regal supremacy established by law, as often and in such manner as the first canon of the church doth require.

“ 5. That the foregoing directions be also observed by those who write any thing concerning the said subjects.

“ 6. Whereas we are also credibly informed, that it is the manner of some in every diocess, before their sermon, either to use a collect and the Lord’s prayer, or the Lord’s prayer only (which the fifty-fifth canon prescribes as the conclusion of the prayer, and not the whole prayer), or at least to leave out our titles, by the same canon required to be declared and recognised; we do further direct that you require your clergy, in their prayer before the sermon, that they do keep strictly to the form in the said canon, or to the effect thereof.

“ 7. And whereas we also understand that divers persons, who are not of the clergy, have of late presumed not only to talk and to dispute against the Christian faith concerning the doctrine of the blessed Trinity, but also to write and publish books

and pamphlets against the same, and industriously spread them throughout the kingdom, contrary to the known laws, and particularly to one act of parliament made in the ninth year of king William III., entitled, ‘An act for the more effectually suppressing of blasphemy and profaneness;’ we, taking all the matters above-mentioned into our royal and serious consideration, and being desirous to do what in us lies to put a stop to these disorders, do strictly charge and command you, together with all other means suitable to your holy profession, to make use of your authority, according to law, for the repressing and restraining of all such exorbitant practices; and, for your assistance, we shall give charge to our judges, and all other civil officers, to do their duty herein in executing the said act, and all other laws against all such persons as shall by these means give occasion of scandal, discord, and disturbance in our church and kingdom.”

The most perfect laws, human and divine, have been found insufficient to prevent crime, though the violators of them may be visited with the severest penalties. The fear of punishment may prompt a man to act with caution, so as not to violate the letter of the law, whilst a determined opposition to its spirit may rankle in his heart, and inflame his mind with the worst of passions. The above royal mandate might have had some effect in checking the publication of those objectionable sentiments it was intended to suppress, but the leaven of an anti-christian spirit having pervaded

the body of the nation, from this period its unhallowing influences were diffused through all ranks of society, until the effects were felt at the foundation of the British throne.

The rites, ceremonies, privileges, and immunities of the established church being now settled by law, and the act of toleration having turned the sword of outward persecution from the dissenters, a spirit of inertness became very general among the clergy of every denomination. Whilst the ministers of the gospel in England were resting on their oars, and enjoying the calm that succeeded the storm of persecution which had so long agitated the country, the spirit of infidelity was diffusing its baneful influence over the continent of Europe, but especially in France, where education and science were more generally cultivated. In that country the fair face of Christianity was so disfigured and degraded by the mummeries of popery, as to be altogether irreconcilable with the light of reason. Men of enlightened and reflecting minds could discover nothing in the lives of the priests to induce them to believe that they were more influenced by a spirit of disinterested charity than other men. Nor could they reconcile the boasted pretensions of their church to infallibility,—the power of absolving men from the most solemn oaths and obligations,—to exempt them from the pains and penalties to be inflicted on transgressors in a future state,—with the government and perfections of an infinitely wise, impartial, and holy Being. Wit-

nessing, as they did, the people prevented from searching after knowledge, by the caprice of an interested priesthood, who well knew that their doctrines and conduct would not bear the test of an enlightened investigation; and, having no accessible source from which to derive correct information, they drew the awful conclusion that religion was nothing more than a piece of state policy, imposed upon the people for the purpose of keeping them in ignorance, that they might the more readily be used as occasion required. Having avowed their sentiments, associations were formed and correspondences opened with men of the same principles in other countries, and many were found in England whose minds were predisposed to infidelity, as an effect of the disputation about the doctrine of the Trinity, and the unfriendly feelings entertained towards the government of the country.

That zealous and but too successful missionary in the cause of infidelity, Voltaire, visited this country after he was released from his second imprisonment in the Bastile, in 1727, and, during his abode in England, he published his "Henriade" by subscription. This insidious enemy to Christianity scattered a large portion of the poison of infidelity in this country, which insinuated itself into all classes of society throughout the land, and doubtless would have produced similar effects in England to those which were experienced in France, had not divine Providence raised up an effectual antidote

in one of the most extraordinary revivals of religion that has ever taken place in any part of the world since the days of the apostles.

It was about this period that Mr. John Wesley, his brother Charles, and a few other young men in the university of Oxford, began meeting together to assist each other in studying the sacred Scriptures, for the purpose of perfecting that "holiness without which no man can see the Lord." The more closely they studied the word of God, and the operations of their own depraved nature, the deeper were their convictions that all mere human efforts would fail of attaining that object, unassisted by divine grace. For the attainment of that grace they resolved to observe the fasts of the ancient church every Wednesday and Friday, and to receive the sacrament weekly. By reducing these resolutions to practice, the uniformity of their conduct attracted general observation, when, in the year 1729, a young gentleman of Christ College, said, "there is a new set of Methodists sprung up;" alluding either to a college of physicians at Rome in the time of Nero, who, in consequence of putting their patients under regimen, were called Methodists, or to a sect of popish polemical doctors that arose in France about the middle of the seventeenth century, and were called Methodists, from the different manner in which they treated the controversy with the Hugonots. "The name," says Mr. Wesley, "was new and quaint, so it took immediately, and the Methodists were

known all over the university." The most speculative theorist of that day could never have imagined that the name given to a few pious individuals at Oxford, as a badge of reproach, would have designated a branch of the Christian church which, within the space of one century, would spread into all the four quarters of the globe, and have enrolled in its annals more than a million of members.

In October, 1735, Messrs. John and Charles Wesley, with two others, embarked as missionaries to the Indians in North America. But this mission not succeeding to their expectation, after enduring many severe trials, Mr. John Wesley returned to England early in the year 1738. During his absence from England, he had held frequent conversations with the Moravian missionaries on the subject of experimental religion, and from them he had learned more perfectly the way of salvation by faith in Christ Jesus. After he had experienced the happy effects of justification by faith in his own mind, it gave a new tone and character to his ministry. On taking a retrospect of the way in which he had hitherto been brought, it appears evident that divine Providence was preparing him for a special work. Wherever he preached the churches were crowded to excess, and the Lord gave testimony to the word of his grace as delivered by his servant. In proportion as his ministry was owned of God, and blessed to the people, he was forsaken and

persecuted by his friends, to whom he was most sincerely and affectionately attached. The doors of the churches were one after another closed against him, until he was actually compelled to leave that church in the cradle of which he had been nursed,—the doctrines of which he cordially believed,—to the services of which he was warmly attached,—and for the prosperity of which he fervently prayed to the end of his life. The loss of no friend was more painfully felt by Mr. Wesley than that of his early acquaintance, and fellow labourer in the gospel, the Rev. George Whitfield. It appears that during Mr. Whitfield's abode in America he had imbibed the doctrine of unconditional election and reprobation, and on his return to England, in 1741, he separated himself from Mr. Wesley, though every possible means were used by the latter to prevent it. Finding the pulpits in the churches no longer accessible, and multitudes following him with intense anxiety to hear the great truths of the gospel, on Monday the second of April, 1739 he preached for the first time in the open air, on an eminence in the suburbs of Bristol, and in a short time after to thousands of people who crowded to hear him in Moorfields, London. In the latter end of 1739, the first Methodist society was formed in London, which consisted of a few individuals whose minds were enlightened by attending his ministry, and who applied to him for private instructions on the subject of experimental religion. As their num-

bers daily increased, he formed them into classes, and appointed one person in each class as the leader, whose office it is to see each member in his class once in the week, to give them such advice, direction, instruction, encouragement, or reproof, as occasion may require.

The standard doctrines of the church of England are the doctrines held and taught by the Wesleyan Methodists, including, 1. The doctrine of universal depravity, or original sin, through the fall of our first parents,—that man was made in the image and likeness of God,—that through his disobedience to the divine command he lost his original rectitude, and subjected his body to pain and death, and his soul to endless misery. 2. They believe in the proper divinity, or godhead, of Jesus Christ,—that he is over all God, blessed for ever and ever,—that he took upon him a perfect human body, and a rational human soul, being perfect God and perfect man. 3. They believe in the meritorious sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, as the procuring cause of man's salvation,—that the extent of his atonement is commensurate with the sins of all mankind,—“the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all,”—“that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man;”—or, as expressed in the consecration prayer used in the established church, speaking of the tender mercy of our heavenly Father, who gave his “only Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption, who made there by his one

oblation of himself once offered, a full, perfect, and sufficient oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." 4. They believe that every sinner must comply with the gospel terms of salvation,—repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ,—or perish in his sins for ever. Repentance is defined by Mr. Wesley as being a "conviction of sin, producing real desires and sincere resolutions of amendment." The fruits of repentance are,—forgiving every one their offences,—avoiding every known sin,—using the means of grace with earnest prayer for mercy to pardon past sin, and for grace to renew and change the heart. Mr. Wesley, speaking of faith, says, "I mean, not only that without faith we cannot be justified; but also, that as soon as any one has true faith, in that moment he is justified." In their statement of justification by faith, they renounce all dependence on works as having any part in a sinner's justification; maintaining that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law, but that good works will follow as the fruit of faith. They define faith as a divine, supernatural, *ελεγχος*, evidence, or conviction, of things not seen,—a spiritual sight of God. Justifying faith is a divine conviction, wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me." The immediate effects of this faith are, pardon for sin, peace with God, and the spirit of adoption witnessing to the reality of that change. Another peculiar doctrine held by the

Methodists is that of sanctification, which they define as consisting in being renewed in righteousness and true holiness,—in loving God with all the heart, and mind, and soul, and strength. Of this, faith is both the condition and instrument. They believe that a person may fall from this state of salvation to rise no more for ever ; and on this doctrine they found the important duties of self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer. The charge which has been so often preferred against them, viz., that of holding the doctrine of absolute perfection, is entirely without foundation. It is evident, from their standard writings, that they do not believe in the attainment of absolute, angelic, or paradaical perfection in this life.

The above statement embraces all the doctrines peculiar to the Methodists ; and it must be admitted that what is said of several other sects will not apply to them, "that the more enlightened views of the present race have rendered obsolete many of their original peculiarities." The economy of Methodism is founded upon such simple principles, that, as far as human ingenuity could devise, provision is made for preserving their doctrines unadulterated as long as the sun and moon endure. Not only are the candidates for the ministry carefully examined as to their belief on every point of doctrine, but every preacher, so long as he continues in the ministry, from the president of the conference to the youngest probationer, undergoes an annual examination before

his brethren ; and, if it be found that his views are changed on any of the standard doctrines of the connexion, he is not allowed to occupy the pulpit in any of their chapels, as those doctrines are all recognised in the chapel trust-deed. Consequently, should the trustees be disposed to connive at a preacher who taught doctrines contrary to Methodism, the lord chancellor, who is the guardian of all trust property, could take possession of the chapel for allowing it to be appropriated to other purposes than that for which it was originally erected.

Members are admitted into the Methodist society on their professing a desire to flee from the wrath to come and to be saved from their sins. They are usually kept a few months on trial, during which the rules of the society are given them to read ; and if, at the end of their probation, there be no objection to their moral character, they are received as accredited members. And so long as their conduct corresponds with their profession they enjoy the privileges of the body. But the receiving of members into the Methodist society and excluding from it are not left entirely to the preachers. Their character and case is inquired into at a meeting of the preachers, stewards, and leaders, who give their opinion on the propriety or impropriety of their admission or expulsion. The doctrines held, and the discipline exercised, by this numerous body of protestant dissenters, are, however, in such general circulation, that it is not necessary we should enlarge upon them here; but

we shall briefly notice the effects which their publication by Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors produced on the minds and morals of the people throughout the country. The standard of religion and morality in England was at this period at a very low ebb, and apparently but little was wanting to fill up the measure of our national iniquity. But soon after Mr. Wesley and his fellow labourers, began to preach the gospel in such plain language that the people could understand, a moral change became visible in every place to which their labours were extended. On their first visiting a place, they generally took their stand in the open air, except where the countenance of some leading person procured for them the use of a public building. But in a short time they began to erect places for public worship both in towns and villages, to which multitudes flocked amidst the most violent outrages committed against their persons and property; the rioters in many cases meeting with encouragement both from the civil and ecclesiastical authorities. But these persecutions neither intimidated the preachers nor prevented the people from hearing; for thousands began to turn their attention to the long-neglected subject of religion, who had hitherto been led away with the political speculations and infidel mania which had spread their pestiferous influence through the whole kingdom.

It is a fact founded upon historical evidence, that no revival of religion, since the apostolic age,

had continued to flourish more than thirty years. Many who saw the commencement of Methodism, and marked its rapid progress, predicted, that within thirty years from its rise it would arrive at its climax. In the year 1769, however, just thirty years after the formation of the first society, Mr. Wesley numbered twenty-eight thousand two hundred and sixty-three members in connexion with him, and the work was still progressing. The former prediction having failed, it was then said that such was the influence Mr. Wesley had acquired over the societies that they might flourish during his lifetime, but after his death they would decline more rapidly than they had risen. At the conference preceding the death of Mr. Wesley, in 1790, the number of members in society was one hundred and twenty thousand one hundred and eighty-three. But so far were the societies from retrograding after the death of their venerable founder, that, notwithstanding a division was made in the connexion, and a new sect formed under Alexander Kilham, in the year 1800, ten years after Mr. Wesley's death, the number in society was one hundred and eighty-four thousand nine hundred and seventy-nine. In the year 1820, they had increased to four hundred and eighty-three thousand two hundred and eighty-three; and in 1830, to seven hundred and sixty-four thousand one hundred and six.

This peculiarity in the history of Methodism has baffled all the calculations of the speculative

theorist, and can only be solved by reference to causes which they do not always consult. It is almost next to impossible for any one to know the real state of the nation at the time of their rise,—the providential manner in which Mr. Wesley was led to adopt the different parts of their economy,—and the national benefits which have resulted, both in church and state, without being convinced that the Methodists are a peculiar people, raised up by divine Providence for a peculiar purpose. The Methodists, as agents of a merciful Providence, by promoting the revival of practical religion, turned the attention of the people of this country from those infidel and revolutionary principles, which were then rapidly spreading through the land, and which in all human probability would have produced the same effects in this country that they did in France,—the entire overthrow of church and state. But thousands who would have been foremost to carry into effect any revolutionary project, being now brought under a religious influence, were at this dangerous crisis turned to pray for their king, and for the peace and prosperity of the nation. Thus, whilst many who moved in the higher circles of society were inflaming the passions of the baser sort against the Methodists, by representing them as false prophets, and as enemies to the church and king, divine Providence was employing them as instruments to preserve the throne to his majesty, and the pulpit to his ministers.

There is another peculiarity in Methodism, which may in part account for their continued prosperity,—they not only in their preaching declare to sinners that they must either repent or perish; but with equal earnestness they press upon believers the necessity of going on to perfection,—and upon such as enjoy the perfect love of God the importance of aspiring after still greater attainments in the divine life. By preaching the possibility of falling from grace, they promote a course of self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer; whilst the animating prospect of their eternal enjoyments being proportioned to their proficiency in holiness of heart, excites them to a diligent use of the means of grace for the attainment of that object. From a dispassionate view of the sound scriptural principles on which the society is founded, and the impartial manner in which their discipline is enforced, it is probable that the Wesleyan Methodists will exist as a body to the latest posterity.

We cannot close our account of the Wesleyan Methodists, without noticing their foreign missions, as forming an integral part of the connexion. The commencement of these missions was as purely providential, and owes as little to any pre-organized plan matured by Mr. Wesley, as any part of their economy. Wesleyan Methodism was first planted on the vast continent of America by a Mr. Embury, a local preacher from Ireland, who settled at New York about the year 1767. The pious mind of Embury was greatly pained on finding that the

people were addicted to almost every vice. He first invited a number of his countrymen to his own house, to whom he preached salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The report of his preaching soon drew others to hear, and in a short time it was found necessary to engage a large room to accommodate the still increasing number of hearers. About the same time a Mr. Strawbridge, another local preacher from Ireland, but unacquainted with Embury, settled in Frederic county, in the state of Maryland, where he began to call sinners to repentance; and the Lord blessing the labours of his servant, many were converted from the error of their ways. In the following year captain Webb, who was brought to the enjoyment of religion under the ministry of Mr. Wesley, at Bristol, in 1765, was appointed barrack-master at Albany. That zeal in the cause of God which distinguished the Captain through life, soon brought him to an acquaintance with Mr. Embury at New York; where the novel scene of a minister of religion officiating in a military dress brought such numbers to hear, that the room, which was sixty feet long and eighteen wide, would not contain the numbers of people who attended. The building of a preaching-house was next contemplated; and in the year 1768 the first Methodist chapel in the western world was erected.

The Captain, in conjunction with his associates, wrote to Mr. Wesley, informing him of the providential manner in which the work had begun, and

requesting him to appoint some preachers to labour among them in America. Mr. Wesley, who was very careful not to go before, but always ready to follow the openings of divine Providence, at the conference in 1769 appointed Mr. Richard Boardman, and Mr. Joseph Pilmore as the first missionaries sent out of the united kingdom by the Methodist conference. The work continuing to spread, more preachers were requested, and in 1773 Mr. Wesley appointed Mr. Rankin and Mr. Shadford. The spread of religion in America by the ministry of the Methodists, is almost without a parallel. In May 1777 they numbered about forty preachers, and seven thousand members. But, as we cannot enter into a detail of the work since that period, it is sufficient for us here to state that at the conference in 1829 there were under the care of the Methodist conferences in the United States of America four hundred and forty-seven thousand seven hundred and forty three members in society,—one thousand, six hundred and ninety-seven preachers appointed to circuits, and one hundred and twenty supernumerary preachers. They have also established missions in all the four quarters of the globe, in which are employed about two hundred missionaries, and a great number of schoolmasters, who have under their care many thousands of the children of heathen parents, who are instructed in the principles of Christianity. The whole of the Wesleyan missionary operations are carried on at an annual

expense of about fifty thousand pounds, which is raised by voluntary contributions.

With this revival of religion, a desire was excited to read and possess the word of God. The demand for the Scriptures in the Welsh language became great and urgent; and a supply having been repeatedly, but in vain, sought for through the ordinary channels, a few individuals connected with the principality consulted together on the subject of forming a Bible society for Wales, when the Rev. Joseph Hughes, a baptist minister, observed, that as Wales was not the only part of the kingdom where a want of Bibles prevailed, why not a Bible society for the kingdom? Why not for the world? This hint gave rise to an institution so vast in the magnitude of its design, and beneficent in its character, that no part of the world, at any period of time, has ever presented any thing like a parallel. In the space of thirty years since its formation, the British and Foreign Bible Society has translated, printed, and circulated, upwards of eight millions of copies of the holy Scriptures in all the principal living languages in the world. This society was founded in the year 1804, when the French revolution, which arose out of the infidel principles which then prevailed, had involved Europe in a sanguinary war. The object of this institution was to furnish every man with the only effectual antidote against infidelity, the unadulterated word of God: and

the extent and influence of its operations have astonished the world.

Whilst the pious and well-disposed protestants were endeavouring to diffuse divine knowledge by missionary exertions and the circulation of the Scriptures, they found that the spirit of popery was still alive; and as it cannot live in the light of divine truth, the old leaven worked underneath, assuming those forms which would best cover its dark designs. The illicit connexion formed by the heir to the throne with a female member of the church of Rome inspired them with hopes of seeing popery re-established in these realms. During the Regency, in the latter part of the reign of George III., several of the restrictive laws were repealed in favour of the Roman catholics; after which, in almost every session of parliament, bills were brought in for catholic emancipation. Those bills were several times lost by large majorities. But disappointment tended only to quicken their zeal in pursuit of their object. Not a public meeting was held in any part of the kingdom relating to civil rights, or religious privileges, but it was attended by disguised Jesuits, who, having ascertained the public feeling, adapted their measures accordingly. The subject of parliamentary reform had long excited public attention. Bills for a reform of parliament were repeatedly brought into the house, and as repeatedly thrown out; so that it appeared as if catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform were

doomed to share the same fate. At length the reformers, radicals, and Roman catholics made common cause, the emissaries of the latter sedulously maintaining that a reformation of parliament would never be effected unless preceded by catholic emancipation,—that reform would follow as a matter of course, as all the catholic members that might be returned would be in its favour,—that if the catholics were emancipated it would unite them with the protestants in one common bond of brotherly affection,—that we should no more hear of the protestants being murdered by the Roman catholics in Ireland in cool blood, &c. By such specious representations numbers who were no friends to catholicism advocated its cause, and assured their opponents that popery was now very different from what it had been in former times,—that the catholics were more enlightened in their views, liberal in their sentiments, and not so much opposed to the protestant interest. Future historians will have to relate how far those statements were correct.

The first effectual step towards the attainment of their object, was the rescinding the Test Act, in 1828, by which catholics and dissenters could hold any civil office of trust or emolument without being compelled to take certain oaths, and receive the sacrament according to the order of the church of England. In the following year, 1829, the long-agitated question was finally disposed of, by the "Catholic Relief Bill" passing through both

houses of parliament, and soon after it became the law of the land, by receiving his majesty's royal assent.

In conclusion, we have to state that hitherto the anticipations of the friends of catholic emancipation have not been realized, as his majesty's ministers have openly avowed. What the effects may be hereafter we shall not attempt to predict. But it is a fact founded upon historical evidence that degradation and crime have increased at every period in proportion as popery has prevailed. There have been more acts of incendiarism committed in England, during the three years since the catholic relief bill was passed than during the two hundred years preceding. Nor has the quantum of crime been diminished in Ireland since the Roman catholics came into power, as appears from official returns, as stated by lord Althorp, showing the increase of criminal causes since that period.—

In the last quarter of 1829, serious crimes in Ireland, 300,

1830	499,
1831	814,
1832	1513,

when it was found necessary to put that country under martial law.

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